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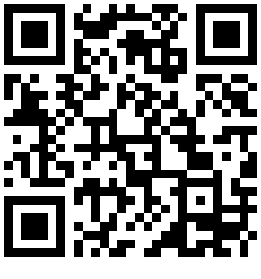

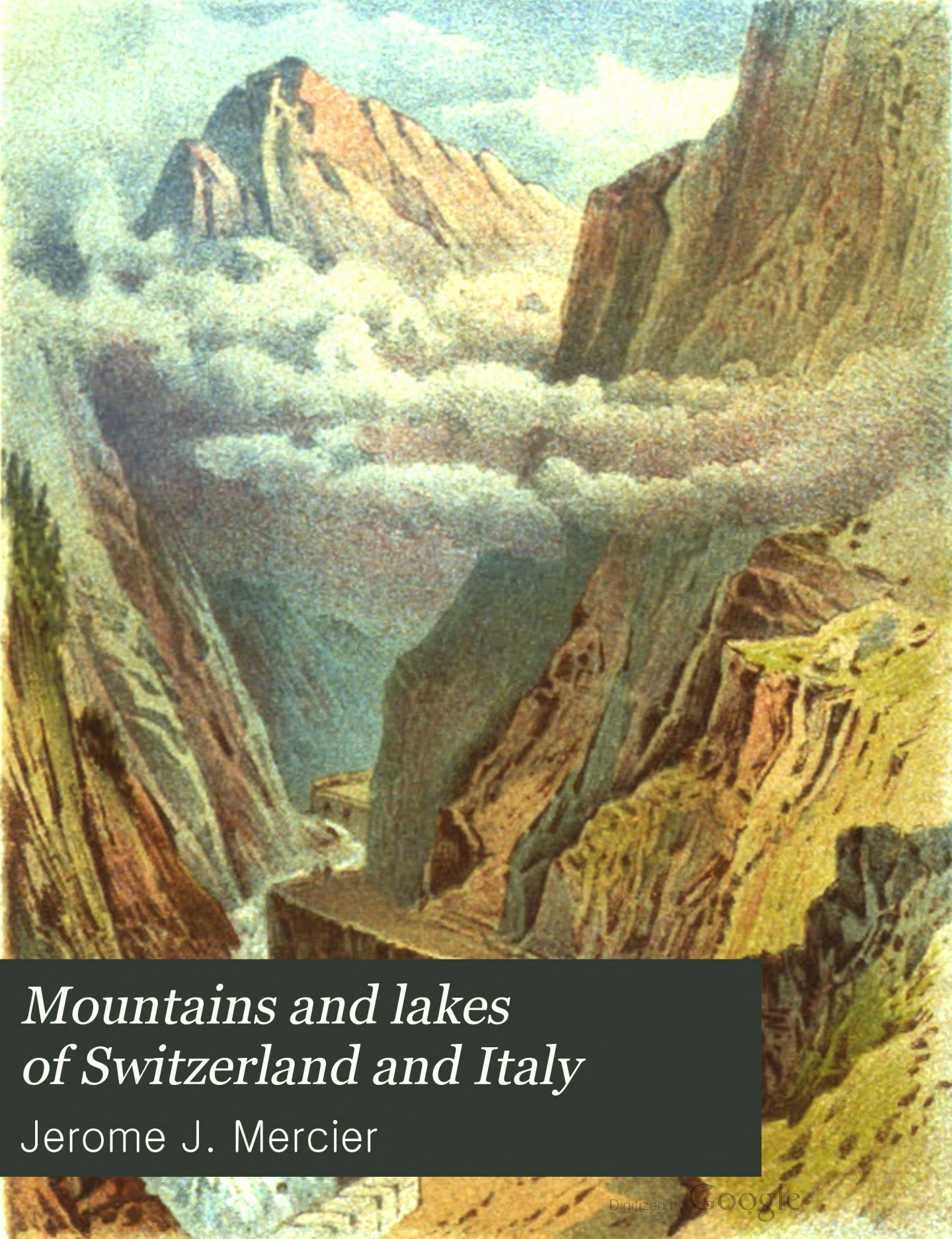

Mountains and lakes of Switzerland and Italy

Jerome J. Mercier

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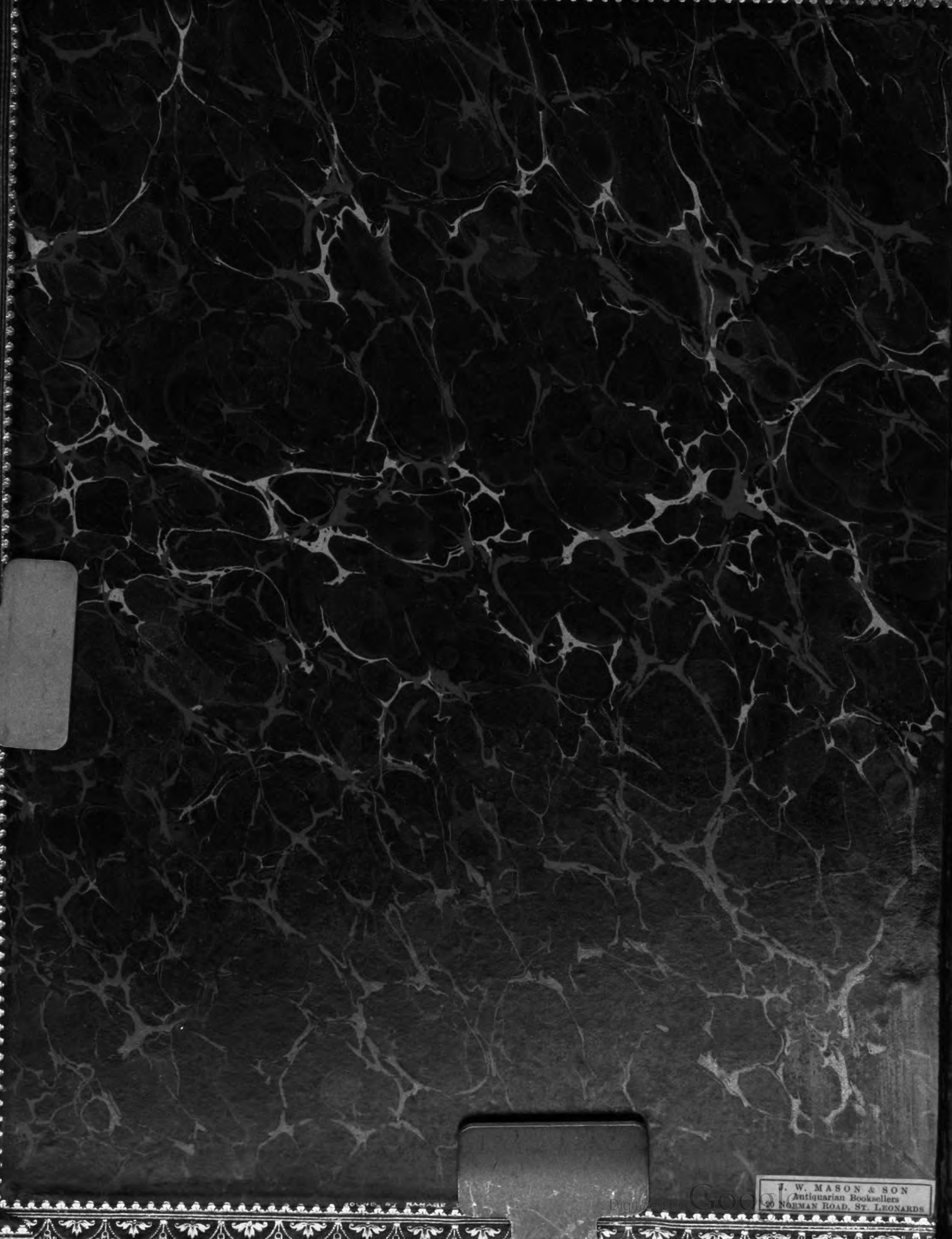
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MOUNTAINS AND LAKES OF SWITZERLAND AND ITALY.

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MOUNTAINS AND LAKES

OF

SWITZERLAND AND ITALY.

Sixty-four Picturesque Views

AFTER DRAWINGS TAKEN FROM ORIGINAL SKETCHES BY C. PYNE.

WITH DESCRIPTIVE NOTES BY THE

REV. JEROME J. MERCIER.

LONDON:
BELL AND DALDY, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
MDCCCLXXI.

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TO MY DEAR FRIEND,

CHARLES BRODIE SEWELL, M.D.

ETC.

THESE NOTES ARE DEDICATED

AS

AN EXPRESSION OF AFFECTION AND ESTEEM.

J. J. M.

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MOUNTAINS AND LAKES OF SWITZERLAND AND ITALY.

'TRAVEL,' says Lord Bacon, 'in the younger sort is a part of education; in the elder a part of experience.' All will admit the truth of his dictum, though the words in which it is expressed, with their studied balance and grave sententiousness, differ as much from our modern English as the doublet and hose, ruff and rapier of Lord Bacon's day differ from the looser garments of a modern tourist. The design of any book of travel must still be either to prepare the 'younger sort' for that part of their education which is only to be found in foreign lands, or to recall to the 'elder sort' an impression fast fading from the memory, or a happy hour spent abroad in days long gone by.

If the former aim be that of the present volume, it cannot be better fulfilled than by a suggestion to those who are looking forward to a Continental tour, that they should make a short stay in some one of the quaint provincial towns of France before proceeding to the better known beauties of Switzerland. The lover of the picturesque will here find much to delight him; and, as these places are seldom visited by tourists, there is a quietness about the towns themselves, and a simplicity and unaffected politeness about their inhabitants, which can rarely be found, and indeed can scarcely be expected, on the beaten track. Troyes, Sens, Dijon, and many other towns, might thus be visited.

Troyes will be found a convenient resting-place, should the tourist wish to enter Switzerland at Basle. The town is pleasantly situated on the Seine, in the midst of the broad, fertile plain, from which the adjacent district derives its name—Champagne, the plain-country. The circling town walls, which still remain, speak of a time far removed from our own, when Troyes was a strong feudal fortress, built to defend its lords, the Counts of Champagne, from any encroachment which might be made on them by their lawful suzerain, the king of France, or from any sudden attack of neighbouring, but hostile,

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barons. The ramparts are, however, no longer peopled by men-at-arms constantly on the look-out, but by groups of children at play, or by the peaceable townsfolk, who, following a delightful Continental custom, meet here of an evening to stroll leisurely about, frequently to the enlivening strains of a military band, or to sit in small knots under the trees knitting and gossiping. The plan on which the town is built is an irregular one; and as the streets are generally narrow and crooked, and as most of the houses are built of timber and plaster, and have their gables facing the road, the street views are singularly picturesque. The costumes of the market people, too, are very striking; and the sketcher will find subjects for his pencil at every turn and corner.

The famous Treaty of Troyes was concluded here between the French and English in April, 1420. By this extraordinary convention Henry V. of England was appointed to succeed the imbecile French king, Charles VI., to the exclusion of the Dauphin (afterwards Charles VII.), on condition that Henry should marry the Princess Katharine, the daughter of Charles. It was stipulated that the crowns of France and England should ever after remain united, and the contracting parties bound themselves to enter into no engagement with Charles, 'calling himself Dauphin of Vienne,' except by mutual consent and with the sanction of the estates of both realms. The French people had become so disgusted with the long civil war that this treaty, which was in reality a most humiliating one, was hailed by them with joy. Henry and Katharine were affianced, May 20th, 1420, before the high altar of the Cathedral, and the marriage was solemnized a few days later in the Church of St. Jean. Henry immediately entered upon the administration of the French kingdom, and Troyes remained in the possession of the English until 1429, when it was reconquered by the French.

A little more than two years later Henry V. died; Charles VI. followed him in a few weeks, and the two rival nations were soon again engaged in hostilities.

Shakespeare has laid at Troyes the charming scene (Hen. V., Act v., Sc. 2), in which the soldier-king Henry pleads his suit with his 'fair flower de luce,' Katharine, in plain, blunt language, knowing—

'No ways to mince it in love, but directly to say, I love you;'

and the princess, in broken English ('broken music' it is called by the King, who underrates his powers of love-making) makes a feint of rejecting the 'enemy of France.'

Three of the churches in Troyes deserve visits: the Cathedral (St. Pierre), though unfinished, is a good specimen of French Pointed work, chiefly in the

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later, or Flamboyant style. The interior is disposed in five aisles, besides the usual lateral ranges of chapels ; and though this arrangement gives an impression of vastness on first entering the building, the general effect is far from satisfactory, as the great width appears to detract from the height of the nave,* although the vaulting of this portion is ninety-six feet above the pavement. Many of the windows are filled with fine painted glass; and three beautiful rose windows deserve special attention. Only one of the western towers is completed, and the whole façade, of late Flamboyant work, is much mutilated.

Troyes Cathedral.

At the Church of St. Urbain there is much to please those who prefer mediæval buildings, untouched by modern hands, to trim restorations.

St. Urbains, Troyes.

* In this respect it may be compared (any further comparison would be unfair) with Westminster Abbey, the nave of which rises ninety-seven feet above the pavement.

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The Church of La Sainte Madeleine has a fine rood-loft (*jubé*), of Late Pointed-work running into Renaissance, exceedingly rich and florid, not to say overdone in its ornamentation. Most churches in France once possessed these architectural features, but they are now rarely seen, the Revolution having generally swept them away, together with stone altars, and many other interesting details. There is a considerable amount of Early French work in this church, and the English archæologist will rejoice to find in the transepts and south doorway some veritable specimens of *tooth-moulding*, an ornament not usually seen out of England. Many of the windows contain good specimens of Renaissance glass, and the Jesse window in the apse is a particularly fine one.

Champagne, of which Troyes was once the capital, was long governed by its own Counts, until it reverted by marriage to the crown of France in 1274. Of these princes, Thibaut VI., 'le faiseur de chansons,' was no mean poet, and many of his songs are still extant. He wrote in the Langue d'Oc or Provençal, which seems to have been most familiar to him, probably from the fact that his mother was a daughter of Sancho the Wise, king of Navarre, and that, on his succeeding to that kingdom on the death of his maternal uncle, Sancho the Strong, in 1234, he transferred his residence from Champagne to Navarre. He took part in the Crusades, which furnished him with subjects for some of the most spirited of his lyrics; and he is said to have been the first to mingle in his verses masculine and feminine rhymes, which now form so distinctive a feature in French versification.

BASLE.

BASLE, BÂLE (Ger. *Basel*), the capital of the canton Basel-stadt (Fr. *Basle Ville*), stands at the N.W. corner of Switzerland, at the point where the Rhine makes a sharp bend northward. The town is divided by the river into two parts, Great Basle (*Gross Basel*) on the left bank, Little Basle (*Klein Basel*) on the right, the two portions being connected by a picturesque bridge, part wood and part stone, from which there is a fine view of the town. A triangular obelisk on the middle of the bridge marks the position of an old clock-tower, in which was placed the famous *Lällenkönig*, a grotesque head, which rolled its eyes and protruded a long red tongue at each swing of the pendulum. It was erected by the inhabitants of Great Basle in derision of the dwellers in Little Basle, in consequence of a dispute between

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them. The clock-tower was destroyed in 1839, but the head is still preserved in the *Concilium Saal* attached to the Cathedral.

Great Basle is a quaint town, built on uneven ground, and laid out in narrow and crooked streets. A few hours spent in strolling about it will well repay the lover of Middle-age domestic architecture; and from the substantial character of many of the old dwelling-houses, a good idea may be obtained of the opulence of an old imperial free city. For Basle, though now in Switzerland, was formerly a free city of the Empire, and long maintained its independence against the attacks of the neighbouring nobles. Its geographical position made it an important place of trade, and when in 1501 it joined the Swiss Confederacy it was by far the most flourishing town in Switzerland. Its importance has, however, now greatly declined, chiefly owing to the exclusive character of its government, which forbade any but burghers of the city from trading in it, and at the same time almost completely excluded strangers from becoming burghers.

The sumptuary laws of Basle, which continued to be enforced until a comparatively recent period, were most strict and peculiar. On the Sunday every person going to church was obliged to wear black; men were not allowed to dress the hair of the ladies of the city, who, by the way, have always been renowned for their beauty; no one was permitted to drive through the city with a footman behind his carriage; dancing was strictly prohibited; and even so late as 1777 it was forbidden to drive carriages through the streets after ten o'clock at night. Several of the restrictions may no doubt be traced to the firm footing which the Reformation made in the city, chiefly through the teaching of Œcolampadius (Hausschein). But with its trade its religious strictness has also declined, and a Sunday spent in Basle will show the tourist that Continental holidays are passed much in the same way, whether among a Roman Catholic or a Protestant population.

Calvin took up his abode for some time at Basle, though Geneva was the chief scene of his labours. Here, too, for a time resided the greatest scholar of his age, the pleasant and amiable Erasmus. His Greek Testament—the first *published* edition—was brought out at Basle in 1516, and its production marks an important era both in the history of literature and in the history of the Reformation.

Basle contends with Grünstadt and Augsburg for being the birthplace of Holbein the Younger, many of whose paintings and drawings may be seen in the Museum. Among them will be found the original sketches of the portraits of the Meyer family, introduced into the celebrated picture of the Madonna, now one of the chief glories of the Dresden Gallery.*

* A replica of this superb picture, somewhat different in detail, is at Darmstadt, and is considered by Kugler to be the original painting.

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The revolution in Switzerland in 1830, due to the spread of liberal opinions, led to grave dissensions between the inhabitants of the town of Basle and the country people of the canton. A sharp contest took place between them in 1832 at Liesthal (8 miles S.E. of Basle). This occasioned the Federal Diet to decree the separation of the canton into two parts—Basel-stadt (Fr. *Basle-Ville*) and Basel-Landschaft (Fr. *Basle-Campagne*). The latter division, which comprises two-thirds of the whole canton, has Liesthal for its capital. The Diet still regards the two divisions as forming only one canton, and their deputies to the Council of the States are permitted only half a vote each, so that if their opinions do not coincide the canton loses its vote.

The Münster, or Cathedral, stands on an elevated platform, overlooking the Rhine, whence a fine view of the Black Forest may be obtained. It is a note-worthy building of red sandstone, presenting a curious mixture of the Romanesque and Pointed styles. The existing church dates from the latter half of the fourteenth century, and occupies the site of a much earlier structure, which was almost entirely destroyed by fire in 1185. The twin western towers and spires show well in the general view of the town, and are of much later date, probably the end of the fifteenth century. The interior suffered greatly from the misguided zeal of the early reformers, but it was completely restored a few years ago, and has now a dignified and pleasing appearance. It contains many objects of interest : a stone font, a fine pulpit, a rood-loft, now used to support the organ, and many interesting tombs, including that of Erasmus. The magnificent golden altar frontal given by the Emperor Henry II. was for five centuries the glory of this church. At the Reformation it was concealed in the vaults, and after remaining there three hundred years, was sold by the Cantonal Government. It is now preserved in the Hôtel de Cluny at Paris.

In the west front the two equestrian statues of St. George and the Dragon and St. Martin and the Beggar should be noticed, as also the north doorway, the columns of which are singularly light and elegant. On the south side is an extensive range of cloisters.

The great Council of Basle, which had for its object the union of the Eastern and Western Churches, and the general reformation of the Church Universal, held its sittings in this Cathedral from 1431 to 1448. The small chamber (*Concilium-Saal*) adjoining the church, in which the Council is popularly supposed to have sat, served apparently as a kind of committee-room. It was originally the chapter-house, and is now used as a museum, in which are many interesting remains, including armour and arms found in the town and neighbourhood, or dredged up from the bed of the river, and the famous *Lällenkönig* already mentioned.

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Town-hall, Basle.

The *Town-hall* (*Rath-haus*) is an interesting building of the sixteenth century, standing near the foot of the Rhine bridge. Here and around the fountains which abound in Basle, a picturesque variety of Swiss costumes may usually be seen.

General View of Basle.

The *Museum* has some good drawings and pictures by Holbein and the early German masters.

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NEIGHBOURHOOD OF BASLE.

Two interesting sites are within easy reach from Basle—the battle-field of St. Jacob, and the Roman remains at Augst.

The Battle of St. Jacob.—About the year 1440 the canton of Zürich excited the indignation of the other Swiss cantons by appealing to the Emperor to decide a dispute between them, and by putting herself under his protection. In acknowledgment of this assistance Zürich conveyed secretly to the Emperor about half of her territory in 1422. The remaining cantons* refused to acquiesce in this transfer, and made war on Zürich; and the unhappy city, which had lost a quarter of its inhabitants from the plague only a few years previously, suffered the most cruel ravages. To effect a diversion in favour of his allies, the Emperor called to his assistance large bodies of irregular troops then assembled in France under Count Armagnac, and known from that circumstance as Armagnacs. An army of 30,000 of these mercenaries, under the Dauphin (afterwards Louis XI.), marched against the Swiss, who were then stationed at Farnsburg, some fifteen miles from Basle. A body of 1600 Swiss endeavoured to force their way through the French into Basle, and after a desperate conflict of ten hours, they were, almost to a man, cut to pieces at the village of St. Jacob, situated just outside the city walls. Louis, struck with the courage of the Swiss, made an alliance with them, and enrolled a certain number of them as his body-guard—a practice continued by the French kings to the reign of Charles X. Zürich soon afterwards withdrew from her alliance with Austria, who restored her ceded territory. The site of the great battle of St. Jacob is marked by a small Gothic cross, erected in 1824; and the remembrance of the victory is perpetuated in the name given to the wine grown in the neighbourhood—*Schweitzer Blut.*

Near Rheinfelden, seven miles from Basle, is *Basel-Augst*, the site of the ancient Roman station, *Augusta Rauracorum*,† from the ruins of which the modern town of Rheinfelden is built. The curving lines of an amphitheatre may still be traced, and many columns, inscriptions, &c., remain on the spot, but the greater part of the relics found here have been carried to Basle. Augusta Rauracorum was destroyed by the Huns in 450. Its mediæval representative, Rheinfelden, was one of the frontier fortresses of the Holy Roman Empire, and underwent many sieges until it was finally taken and dismantled by the French in 1744.

* It should be noticed that at this time the Swiss Confederacy only numbered eight members, Schwyz, Uri, Unterwalden, Luzern, Zürich, Glarus, Zug, and Bern. Basle was simply an *ally* of the Confederation.

† Numerous Roman towns bore the name of Augustus, which may still be traced in a mutilated form in the modern appellations: Zaragossa (Cæsarea Augusta), Aosta (Augusta Prætoria), Badajoz (Pax Augusta), Auch, Autun, Augsburg. It is interesting to speculate what the many *Victorias* of our own time may become after the lapse of centuries.

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BASLE TO LUCERNE.

The railroad from Basle to Lucerne passes through a part of Switzerland possessing no very great interest, though pleasant peeps of the well-wooded slopes of the Jura are obtained on the first part of the journey, and on nearing Lucerne a splendid mountain prospect, embracing Pilatus and the Rigi, unfolds itself. The great tunnel of Hauenstein (8340 feet) carries the line under one of the numerous lateral ranges of the Jura, and soon after emerging from this, the little town of Aarburg is seen, prettily situated on the slope of a hill, which is crowned with a dismantled fortress. After passing this point an occasional glimpse of the Bernese Alps may be obtained on the right, while on the left lies the pleasant little lake of Sempach. The town of Sempach, which has given its name to one of the most memorable battles of Swiss independence,* lies fully a mile from the railroad, on the opposite, or eastern shore of the lake. This battle, which closed one of the innumerable quarrels between the Swiss and the house of Austria, was fought on July 8, 1386. Leopold of Austria, enraged with the inhabitants of Sempach for their attachment to the Confederate Swiss cause, advanced with a large army to chastise them. He found the people of the town with their allies from Lucerne, the Forest cantons and neighbouring districts (1500 in all) already assembled in battle array. Anxious to begin the fight, Leopold, without waiting for his infantry, ordered his knights to dismount (as the ground was too rugged for their horses to manœuvre with safety) and advance upon the Swiss with levelled spears. The Confederates in vain endeavoured to force a passage through this wall of steel, when *Arnold von Winkelried*, a knight of Unterwalden, exclaiming, 'I will open a way for freedom; take care of my wife and children,' rushed forward, and seizing with both arms as many of the spears as he could grasp, which were instantly buried in his body, thus made a breach in the Austrian ranks, through which the Swiss poured. Their line once broken, the knights in their heavy armour were powerless, and all fell a prey to the Switzers. Duke Leopold himself perished, and a small chapel now stands on the spot where he met his death, the battle-field being marked by four small crosses. The hero of the day, Arnold von Winkelried, is immortalised in the grateful remembrance of his countrymen, who keep an annual festival in honour of the victory, and in the spirited ballad of one of the combatants, Albrecht Tchudi.

* The four great battles of Swiss independence were those of Morgarten (1315) and Sempach (1386), in which the Swiss successfully resisted the Austrians; Grandson (1476), and Morat (1476), in which they defeated Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy.

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LUCERNE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

LUCERNE (Ger. *Luzern*) is a most picturesque and charmingly situated town, standing on the swift river Reuss, where it issues from the Lake of Lucerne—or lake of the four forest cantons (*Vierwaldstätter See*). An amphitheatre of hills, stretching from the Rigi to Pilatus, shuts us in on the north-west, while in front spread 'the shining levels of the Lake,' backed by the snowy ranges which cover the cantons of Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden.

The town itself has many interesting features, and its circling walls, with watch-towers rising here and there, its quaint bridges, its street-views, enlivened with groups of townspeople and peasants, and relieved by an occasional peep of the Lake, or the more distant mountains—offer many charming subjects for the sketcher. The three bridges which cross the emerald-green waters of the Reuss, near its exit from the Lake, give a distinctive character to the town, and well deserve careful inspection.

The *Capelsbrücke*, which crosses the river in an oblique direction, is covered with a roof, upon which are 154 paintings, representing scenes from Swiss history, or from the lives of St. Leodegar and Mauritius, the patron saints of Lucerne. Near it rises a picturesque old water-tower (*Wasserthurm*), formerly used as a lighthouse (*lucerna*), from which the name 'Lucerne' is supposed to be derived. A little lower down the stream is the *Reussbrücke*, a more modern structure, and the only one of the three passable for carriages. The third bridge, the *Mühlenbrücke*, or *Spreuerbrücke*, has, like the first, a roof, adorned with thirty-six paintings from Holbein's 'Dance of Death,'—

'The Dance of Death.
All that go to and fro must look upon it,
Mindful of what they shall be, while beneath,
Among the wooden piles, the turbulent river
Rushes, impetuous as the river of life,
With dimpling eddies, ever green and bright,
Save where the shadow of this bridge falls on it.'—*Longfellow.*

At the extreme east of the town stands the Cathedral (*Hofkirche* or *Stiftskirche*), of no great beauty, though its slender twin spires show well in the general landscape. From the adjacent churchyard fine views of the town and lake may be obtained, while not far distant, in a secluded spot to which a little footpath leads, is the famous *Lion of Lucerne*, sculptured in 1821 in memory of the Swiss guard who were massacred in defending the Tuileries in 1792. This monument is, perhaps, one of the most simple and touching in the world. A lion, crouched in his death agony, is lying in a recess cut in the face of the living rock. His body is transfixed by a lance, while his paw still pro-

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The Rigi from Lucerne.

tects a shield on which are the lilies of France. A pool of water at the base of the rock forms a mirror in which the monument, with its mantle of creepers, is reflected. The whole was executed after a design of the Danish sculptor, Thorwaldsen, and plainly shows the hand of a great artist.

Immediately in front of Lucerne stand the two well-known and much-fre-

Pilatus from Lucerne.

quented mountains, the *Rigi* and *Pilatus*, one or both of which should be

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ascended for the sake of the view. In spite of the many efforts to decry the ascent of the Rigi as a stupid and cockney exploit, the mountain still attracts thousands of visitors, and, indeed, the enjoyment to be derived from it is very great. The walk to the top is a fair test of endurance; at any rate the mountain is a good and easily accessible training-ground for a first attempt at mountain climbing. But in addition to this, beauties of all kinds will disclose themselves at every step, if the old adage be observed,—

'Chi va piano, va sano,
Chi va sano, va lontano,'

and if the walk be undertaken for the pleasures which may be derived from it, and not simply with a view of getting to the top as speedily as possible. The whole *entourage* is grand and elevating; the view of the distant mountains is continually changing as the path winds onward and upward, or as light clouds fleet over the face of the sun and dot the mountain slopes with accidental shadows. The smooth surface of the lake below is occasionally revealed, giving glimpses of market boats going from place to place, and bringing an assurance that the traveller is not quite cut off from the busy haunts of men below him, while nearer to the eye fresh forms of leaf and flower are met with at every turn.

The ascent of the Rigi may be made from several places, the chief being *Arth*, on the lake of Zug (one of the most charming of the smaller Alpine lakes), or from *Küssnacht* or *Wäggis*, on the Lake of Lucerne. These paths are so well trodden that they can scarcely be missed, but it is always convenient to have a guide or porter to carry whatever luggage may be required, or to lend assistance in the event of a sudden storm. Four hours at the least should be taken for the ascent on foot, and more if the road is to be thoroughly enjoyed. Within half an hour of the summit (*Rigi-Kulm*), a prominent portion of the Rigi range known as the *Rigi-Staffel* is reached, whence a good view may be obtained. The tourist may either spend the night here, or at the hotel on the summit, and in either case it is advisable to reach the resting-place sufficiently early in the day to give time for a lounge, and to see the sun set. The rival claims of sunrises and sunsets will perhaps never be equitably adjusted, and as it is incumbent on everybody who spends the night on the Rigi to leave his bed in order to see if the sun will deign to show himself on rising, and as he so frequently disappoints his attendants, it is as well to make sure of the sunset, if possible. The aphorism, reputed to be among the wise sayings of the Koran, 'Blessed are they who expect nothing, for they shall never be disappointed,' should, however, be borne carefully in mind, and the following well-known lines too often describe the ill luck of travellers up the Rigi:—

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'Nine weary up-hill miles we sped,
The setting sun to see;
Sulky and grim he went to bed,
Sulky and grim went we.
Seven sleepless hours we tossed, and then,
The rising sun to see;
Sulky and grim we rose again,
Sulky and grim rose he.'

Should, however, the traveller be rewarded with a fine sunrise, it must be acknowledged that the sight is a most superb one. The faint streak of light in the east which denotes the approach of the 'orient conqueror of gloomy Night,' insensibly grows more and more luminous, and the distant mountain peaks, lying cold and white in the starlight, are suffused in succession with a delicate rose tint. Gradually the nearer landscape unfolds itself, and the eye distinguishes forests, lakes, hills, towns, and villages. At length, the sun thrusts itself over the eastern horizon, and the whole of the magnificent view is flooded with light and warmth.

The mountain mass known as Pilatus differs totally in character from the Rigi. Here bare and rugged peaks and barren rocks succeed to richly-clothed and well-wooded slopes. It is now almost as frequently ascended as the Rigi, and an excellent hotel on the summit affords an opportunity of spending the night there in order to see the sun rise. Pilatus is, however, rarely free from clouds, and the terrific storms which frequently burst upon the Lake of Lucerne seem to gather on his summit and rugged sides. A wild local tradition relates that Pontius Pilate wandered conscience-stricken about this district, until he put an end to his miserable existence by throwing himself into a small lake on the top of the mountain which bears his name. The Swiss peasant regards the floating cloud on the summit as the unquiet and unabsolved spirit of Pilate hovering about the sunken body; and, until within a recent period, persons were forbidden by the Government to ascend the mountain, fearful lest Pilate should resent any intrusion upon his special domain, and should plague the surrounding country with storms. It is probable that the name Pilatus is derived from the circumstance of the mountain being so constantly capped with a cloud (*pilcatus*, capped). To the people living near, Pilatus serves the purpose of a weather-glass, and from the position and form of the cloud on his summit or side the state of the weather for the coming day can be predicted with tolerable certainty.

'Wenn Pilatus trägt sein Hut
Wird das Wetter gut:
Aber hat er seinen Degen
Gibt es Regen.'

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THE LAKE OF LUCERNE.

The *Vierwaldstätter See*, commonly called the Lake of Lucerne, derives its name from the four forest cantons which surround it—*Uri*, *Schwyz*, *Unterwalden*, and *Luzern*. In one sense it may be considered as the political centre of Switzerland, for the union of the inhabitants of the above-named cantons in the early part of the fourteenth century, for the purpose of maintaining their liberty against the encroachments of Austria, laid the foundation of Swiss independence.* The researches of modern historians tend to prove that the early history of Switzerland, like the early history of most countries, is mythical, and that the great Swiss heroes, William Tell, Walther Fürst, Werner Stauffacher, and Arnold vom Melchthal, had no existence, except in the brains of poets and romancers. There must, however, have been at least a germ of truth in these numerous national legends, for it is certain that during the fourteenth century, when the greater part of Europe lay crushed under the weight of the feudal system, the sturdy mountaineers who lived round the Lake of Lucerne successfully withstood the encroachments of the dukes of Austria and maintained their own independence. If Tell and his companions are mere shadows, Schiller, in his noble play of 'Wilhelm Tell,' has clothed them with substantial flesh and blood; and these brave Switzers, though they never lived, may be taken as worthy exponents of the feeling which leads men strenuously to resist all tyranny and Godless oppression, and to give their lives '*pro aris et focis*.' Of them it may be said, as of 'the fair humanities of old religion:'—

> 'They live no longer in the faith of *reason!*
> But still the heart doth need a language, still
> Doth the old instinct bring back the old names.'†

Nothing can be more sternly grand than the scenery on the Lake of Lucerne. It is true that in size and dignity it falls short of the Lake of Geneva, nor can its shores boast of the soft, luxurious beauty of the Lago Maggiore or the Lake of Como; but a colder, severer beauty it has in perfection, and great variety of scene—now majestic with vast, precipitous walls of rock and distant mountain peaks, now pleasant and smiling with neat villages and green orchards sloping down to the water's edge.

* The original cantons (*Urkantone*), Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden, formed their first pact about the year 1300. In 1332 they were joined by Luzern. Zürich, and Glarus joined in 1351; Zug and Bern in 1352; Solothurn and Freiburg in 1481; Basel and Schaffhausen in 1501; and Appenzell in 1513. These thirteen cantons formed the Swiss Confederation as it existed till the French invasion at the close of the eighteenth century. In 1803 Vaud (Waadt), Ticino (Tessin), the Grisons (Graubünden), formerly a distinct confederation, St. Gallen, Thurgau, and Aargau, were admitted as cantons; and lastly the Congress of Vienna in 1815 added Geneva, Neufchâtel (Neuenburg), and the Valais (Wallis).

† Schiller; 'The Piccolomini' (Act iii. scene 4), Coleridge's translation.

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Brunnen.

At the north-eastern angle of the lake at the junction of the Bay of Buochs with the Bay of Uri, stands *Brunnen*, the port of Schwyz, beautifully situated, so as to command a view down each of the above-named reaches. It is the depôt for goods going to and from Italy over the St. Gothard pass; and the handsome storehouse (*Sustenhaus*) bears on its outer walls a rude fresco of the three Confederates, Fürst, Stauffacher, and Melchthal, taking the oath of perpetual alliance between the *Urkantone*. This celebrated compact was made at Brunnen on December 19, 1315, immediately after the battle of *Morgarten*. Opposite Brunnen a natural

Tell's Chapel.

obelisk of rock rises from the water, the *Mythenstein* (or Wytenstein). This

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bears in gilt letters the inscription, 'Dem Sänger Tell's, Friedrich Schiller; Die Urkantone, 1860.' A little further south, some six or seven hundred feet above the surface of the lake, is a green meadow dotted with a few trees and small houses. This is the famous *Grütli* or *Rütli*, where, on the night of the 7th November, 1307, Walther Fürst of Uri, Werner Stauffacher of Schwyz, and Arnold or Erni vom Melchthal of Unterwalden, each with ten trusty followers, met and bound themselves by an oath to be faithful to each other until they should have broken the accursed yoke of Austria from their necks.

'*Fürst.*—Links am See, wenn man
Nach Brunnen fährt, dem Mythenstein grad' über,
Liegt eine Matte heimlich im Gehölz,
Das *Rütli* heiszt sie bei dem Volk der Hirten,
Weil dort die Waldung ausgereutet ward.
Auf öden Pfaden können wir dahin
Bei Nachtzeit wandern und uns still berathen,
Dahin mag Jeder zehn vertraute Männer
Mitbringen, die herzeinig sind mit uns,
So können wir gemeinsam das Gemeine
Besprechen und mit Gott es frisch beschlieszen.

'*Stauffacher.*—So sey's. Jetzt reicht mir eure biedre Rechte,
Reicht ihr die eure her, und so, wie wir
Drei Männer jetzo, unter uns die Hände
Zusammen flechten, redlich ohne Falsch,
So wollen wir *drei Länder* auch, zu Schutz
Und Trutz, zusammen stehn auf Tod und Leben.'

Wilhelm Tell, i. 4.

On the spot where the three chief conspirators stood to take the oath at Grütli three springs of pure water gushed forth—

'And there they are unto this day,
To witness if I lie.'

There is yet one more locality connected with the exploits of William Tell to be seen before quitting the lake. Near the extreme south of the Bay of Uri, on the slopes of the *Achsen Berg*, is a small flat ledge of rock, near the water's edge, known as *Tell's Platte*. Here Tell sprang on shore from Gessler's boat, the management of which had been intrusted to him in a sudden storm, and so freed himself from the clutches of the tyrant. A small oratory has been built here to the memory of Tell, in which mass is said annually on the Sunday after Ascension Day. The ceremony is attended by large numbers of the neighbouring people in their boats, and the scene is a most animated and impressive one.

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THE ST. GOTHARD ROUTE—FLÜELEN TO ANDERMATT.

The upper valley of the turbulent mountain torrent, the Reuss, the chief feeder of the Lake of Lucerne, forms naturally the easiest passage from Switzerland to Italy,—for near the source of this river the main chains of the Alps converge to one point, and consequently a single range only, not a double one, has here to be surmounted. This natural gateway is known as the Pass of Mont St. Gothard, and was formerly by far the most frequented of all the routes across the Alps. Merchants trading between the great commercial towns of Central Europe, and the rich cities of Northern Italy: and ecclesiastics bound on various missions to and from the court of Rome alike pursued their way along this track. The honest inhabitants of the canton Uri, through which the most rugged and difficult portion of the road ran, derived their chief subsistence from attending to the wants of these travellers; while the tolls, levied on the passers-by, formed the bulk of the revenue of the canton itself. Although two Englishmen, no doubt reputed madder than the majority of their countrymen, crossed this pass in their carriages towards the close of the eighteenth century, the route was in reality nothing more than a mule-path roughly paved with huge slabs of stone, and in this state it continued until the year 1820. At that date it was almost entirely deserted for the recently constructed carriage-roads over the Simplon, the Splugen, and the Bernardino, and the dwellers in the valley of the Reuss saw poverty staring them in the face. With true Swiss courage, however, the inhabitants of the cantons Uri and Ticino set to work to construct a good road, and in the face of numerous difficulties completed it in 1832. It is generally regarded as a triumph of engineering skill; while the magnificence of the scenery through which it runs is unsurpassed on any of the great routes, except perhaps the Splügen.

The St. Gothard route begins at Flüelen on the S.E. angle of the Bay of Uri, where diligences or carriages for crossing into Italy may be procured. The road is, however, much too beautiful to be hurried through, and the tourist will do well to send on his luggage to Andermatt or Hospenthal, and to proceed leisurely up the valley on foot. Those, whose walking powers are unequal to the whole journey, may drive as far as Amstäg, where the ascent properly begins. The botanist will find much to occupy his attention, as the flora of this valley is particularly abundant and varied.

After leaving *Flüelen*, the following places are passed:—

Altorf a small town, capital of the canton of Uri, memorable in the traditionary history of Switzerland as being the place where William Tell

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performed his feat of shooting the apple from his boy's head. In the midst of the town a trumpery plaster statue of Tell, which has since 1861 replaced a picturesque fountain, is supposed to indicate the spot on which the hero stood to take his aim, while a fountain some 200 paces away marks the position of the lime-tree (cut down in 1567) to which the boy was bound. The square tower, covered with rude frescoes, which stands near, was for long supposed to indicate the position of this tree, but it has been proved that the building was in existence long before the time of Tell.

From the Capuchin Monastery near the town there is a pleasant view. On the slopes (*Bannberg*) above the building lies the famous '*Bannwald*,' a forest in which the trees are never cut, as they serve to protect Altorf from avalanches and falling rocks (*see* 'Wilhelm Tell,' iii. 3).

On approaching *Amsteg*, the ruins of Gessler's Castle, *Zwing Uri* ('Quell Uri'), may be seen on an eminence to the left. At the bridge just beyond this well-built little village, the St. Gothard road, properly speaking, begins, and continues to rise higher and higher above the bed of the torrent. A third bridge is crossed shortly before reaching *Wasen*, at a narrow chasm called *Pfaffensprung*, from the legend that a monk, with a girl in his arms, here leaped across the Reuss to escape his pursuers.

After passing the small village of *Göschenen*, the dark and rocky defile of the *Schöllenen* is entered. The whole valley is here for three miles narrowed to a gorge, walled in with towering perpendicular cliffs of granite, at the base of which the rapid and impetuous Reuss rages along over huge blocks of stone. The roadway ascends by many windings, now creeping along the face of the cliff, now spanning the ravine in one bold arch. At length the most savage portion of the valley is reached at the *Devil's Bridge* (*Teufelsbrücke*), where a scene of unequalled grandeur meets the view. The Reuss here makes a splendid fall of a hundred feet, throwing its spray on the bridge itself, while sudden gusts of wind (called by the natives *Hutschelm*, 'hat rogue') rush with great violence through the narrow gorge.

This bridge is not, however, the one which figures so largely in the military campaign of 1799. That, though now unused, may still be seen far below the modern roadway, a thin and narrow arch spanning a terrific chasm.

Above the Devil's Bridge the gorge of the Reuss becomes so narrow and the boundary walls of rock so precipitous, that there is absolutely no room for a road along the face of the precipice. Until the year 1707 a pathway was carried round the rocks (*Teufelstein*) by means of wooden platforms (*Die Stäubende Brücke*) hung on iron chains, which were riveted into the rocks above. Subsequently the rock was bored for upwards of 200 feet, and this tunnel (*Urner Loch*, 'Hole of Uri') was afterwards made sufficiently wide to admit two carriages abreast.

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Amsteg.

No contrast can be more striking than the difference of scenery on either side of the Urner Loch. On entering the tunnel the traveller leaves a scene of savage grandeur, nowhere surpassed in the Alps. On issuing from the dark gallery, a level plain covered with verdure appears to the view. This is the *meadow* (*Matte*) from which the chief village of the valley derives its name, *An-der-matt* ('on the meadow'). Here or at *Hospenthal*, a mile farther on, a rest may be made.

Andermatt.

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The upland valley in which these two places are situated is known as the *Urseren-thal.* It was originally peopled from the valley of the Upper Rhine, and became a dependency of the Abbey of Dissentis. Cut off by an impenetrable rocky barrier from Uri, it had no direct communication with the people of that district, though they were in reality near neighbours. When, however, the *Stäubende Brücke* was constructed in the fourteenth century, the inhabitants of Urseren joined themselves politically to the citizens of Uri. The natural result of this was a protracted war with the abbots of Dissentis, which was carried on for many years with varying success. At length the canton Uri, having conquered a considerable territory on the south side of the St. Gothard, was enabled to hold Urseren more strongly within its grasp, and the abbots were obliged to content themselves with a nominal tribute of a pair of white gloves every year from their former subjects. If the traveller is fortunate, he may hear related in this mountain valley the story of the Beautiful Gloves (see page 24).

The valley of the Reuss has been rendered historically famous by the remarkable military operations which were carried on there in the closing years of the last century. Many sanguinary battles were there fought in localities where it would have been supposed impossible to collect soldiers and the *matériel* of war. The following is an outline of this wonderful campaign. In 1798 the French entered Berne, and rapidly spread over the greater part of Switzerland. The Forest Cantons firmly opposed the invaders, and in particular the inhabitants of the canton Uri, assisted by a large body of Austrian troops, offered a most determined resistance. The French, however, in 1799, by a vigorous attack drove the Austrians over the St. Gothard Pass. This defeat roused a desperate energy in the Swiss peasants, and by their aid the Austrians forced the French back again over the St. Gothard, and drove them down the whole length of the valley of the Reuss, obstinately contesting every step. The French sought refuge in their flotilla on the Lake of Lucerne, and the Austrians remained masters of the valley. Here with reckless apathy they rested utterly inactive for two months, when French troops again poured in upon them from all sides. The valley became once more the scene of obstinate contests, and once more the Austrians retired before the French, not this time however over the St. Gothard Pass, but eastward over the Oberalp into the Grisons. The French were again masters of the situation, but scarcely had a month elapsed when news was brought to their commander that a fresh army of unknown combatants, 23,000 strong, was gathering at the southern base of the St. Gothard, evidently preparing to force the passage. These proved to be the Russians under the command of the veteran Suwarrow, who designed to unite his forces with the Russian army which then occupied the north of Switzer-

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land. Near the summit of the pass a desperate fight was maintained, and the Russians seemed on the point of being defeated, when the indomitable old Suwarrow caused a grave to be dug, and throwing himself into it declared he would be buried there on the spot where his 'children' had been repulsed. This gave new life to his troops, and the French, being forced back over the pass, retired slowly down the valley, again contesting every step, and entrenched themselves on the Lake of Lucerne. All exit from the valley seemed thus denied to Suwarrow; but with true military genius he boldly struck across the mountains to the right, although the country was totally unknown to him, and closely pursued by the French, threaded his way, often in single file, through the Schächenthal, over the Kinzig Kulm, through the Muottathal, over the Prägel, and lastly through the Sernftthal over the difficult Panixer Pass (7300 ft.) into the valley of the Upper Rhine, where he formed a junction with the scattered remnants of the Russian army in the Grisons. This retreat, which occupied eighteen days, was perhaps the most extraordinary and difficult military exploit ever performed. It cost Suwarrow one-third of his men, nearly all his horses, and the whole of his artillery: his own life too, for on his return to Russia the Emperor Paul treated him with the greatest ingratitude, and this so affected his spirits that he died a few days after his return from this most memorable campaign.

THE ST. GOTHARD ROUTE FROM HOSPENTHAL TO BELLINZONA.

From Hospenthal the St. Gothard road ascends rapidly through a desolate and uninteresting mountain valley, until the summit of the pass (6936 feet) is reached. There is no *mountain* which bears the name of St. Gothard, the French term *mont* being used simply for an elevated tract, no matter whether it be a mountain-peak or a mountain-pass. The summit of the pass lies between two peaks rising nearly 9000 feet, the *Sasso di San Gottardo* and *La Fibbia*, but by the term *Mont St. Gothard* the mountain-*pass* is meant.

A short distance below the summit the *Albergo del S. Gottardo* is reached, where a rest may be made, should the traveller feel disposed to ascend any of the neighbouring mountains. Close by stands the *Hospice*, originally kept by Capuchin monks, but now subsidised by the Cantonal Government for the reception of travellers.

Shortly after passing this spot the road is carried across the *Ticino* (*Tessin*) which descends from a small lake on the east, and is the chief

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feeder of the Lago Maggiore. This stream gives its name to the canton which the traveller has now entered, the independent existence of which only dates from the year 1814. Before that time the various districts which compose it were subject either to the Swiss Confederation or to the three original cantons (*Urkantone*), Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden, and were governed by bailiffs (*Landvögte*), who ruled with no very gentle hand. Hence they are commonly known as the subject bailiwicks. The common language here is a dialect of Italian resembling the Lombard; and the whole appearance of the country, villages, and people, is more Italian than Swiss.

Soon after the summit of the pass is reached, the road begins to descend rapidly by a succession of zig-zags through a desolate ravine, known as the Val Tremola (*Trümmelnthal*), dangerous in winter time from avalanches. The first village reached in the descent is the picturesque one of *Airolo* (Ger. *Eriels*). Here the *Leventina* (*Livinenthal*), as the valley of the Upper Ticino is called, is fairly entered, and the whole aspect of the place as well as the speech of the inhabitants becomes Italian. The valley narrows again to a ravine immediately after passing *Dazio Grande*. Here the turbulent Ticino has forced for itself a passage through *Monte Piottino* (*Platifer*), and rushes foaming down the valley in a series of cataracts, bringing to mind the no less turbulent Reuss, which pursues its noisy course in an opposite direction. The views at this point are superb, as the road is carried close to the waterfalls, and frequently crosses the torrent; the air, too, becomes more and more soft and balmy each moment, and the presence of luxuriant chestnut-trees, figs, and vines, gives indications that the traveller is approaching a more smiling and genial land than the one he has quitted only a few hours before. When *Faïdo* (Ger. *Pfaid*), the capital of the Leventina, is reached, he may congratulate himself that he is really in Italy. The valley broadens considerably as *Giornico* (Ger. *Irnis*), *Bodio*, and *Osogna*, are passed; and as the road turns somewhat westward near *Arbedo*, the picturesque town of *Bellinzona* (p. 26), with its high walls and crown of towers, comes in sight.

Both Arbedo and Bodio are famous in the annals of Swiss warfare. Near the former village a sanguinary battle was fought in 1422 between 3000 Swiss troops and 24,000 Milanese. The Swiss, with great courage, held their ground from morning to night against the overwhelming numbers of their enemies; but their bravery was in this instance of little avail against a multitude. Half their men were left dead upon the field, when the survivors, under cover of the darkness, withdrew, with downcast hearts, over the mountains to their homes.

Midway between Giornico and Bodio lie several huge masses of stone (*Sassi Grossi*), which mark the site of another famous contest, fought in 1478. The Milanese had trespassed on lands belonging to canton Uri and had felled some trees there. This injury was not to be borne by the proud Swiss, whose recent

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Airolo.

victories over the large Burgundian armies of Charles the Bold led them to assert their rights on all occasions, and often to seek a terrible revenge for some trivial or supposed injury. Accordingly a large body of them advanced over the St. Gothard, and penetrated as far as Bellinzona, plundering as they went. Leaving a garrison of 600 men in the district about Giornico and Bodio, the main body returned home with their booty. A body of 15,000 Milanese advanced to expel the Swiss, who laid under water the flat portion of the valley which they held. It was the depth of winter and in the night the water froze hard. The Milanese on the following morning advanced with tottering steps over the ice, when one party of the Swiss, who had *crampons* attached to their feet, rushed upon them and threw them into confusion, whilst another party hurled huge blocks of stone upon them from the neighbouring cliffs. It is said that about 4000 of the Milanese perished on this occasion.

Dazio Grande.

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THE BEAUTIFUL GLOVES.

Once upon a time, when Fairies still dwelt in our beloved valley of Urseren, and the land was therefore more fertile than now, a youth lived in the village of Andermatt who was nephew to my lord Abbot of Dissentis. Now the whole valley was subject to the convent of Dissentis by reason of conquest in fair fight, but the good abbots had commuted the heavy fine which the dalesmen had once paid, till only this sign of subjection remained, that on a certain day in each year some goodly youth, born in the valley, must bear to the abbey a pair of white gloves, well bleached and deftly made. If my lord Abbot for the time being were nice in his dress, the gloves would even be stitched on the back with silver thread, and perfumed with orris-root or other fragrant powders.

When Otto the Handsome lived with his widowed mother in Andermatt, his uncle, the Abbot Placidus, was very dainty in his garments, and the villagers could never make nor buy gloves delicate enough for his liking. He had a fancy that his monks should be fine, tall men, like himself, and had long wished to number Otto among them. But Otto felt no calling to the vows; and although he had studied in the convent all that monks need to learn, neither his uncle's persuasions nor his frowns could induce him to believe that the cowl was yet made which would fit his head.

Now it happened that one summer's evening, when Otto was returning from his pastoral toil to his mother's cot (for my lord Abbot's family were no great folk, and it was by skill, not by birth, that he had won his honours), he passed through a wood of firs, such as grow freely in our valley. And lo! suddenly, as he walked, a ray from the setting sun darted across his path between the pine-stems, as red as a shaft of ruby, and seemed to shoot up a little glade. He noticed it, but was passing on, when, behold! a second ray, redder than the first, which pointed like a finger in the same direction. Some freak or impulse made him turn and follow. Though there was no path, the brambles seemed to make way for him to pass, and he saw that the pretty glade (never remarked before, often as he had passed by that way) ended in a cool green shadow of leaves. As he approached this spot an awe came over him, the sun seemed suddenly to sink, and all the air was soft, and sweet, and dark. The path ended in a thick growth of foliage. He felt a singular disappointment, but turning suddenly, he became aware that on his right, so close that he could touch her with his hand, sat a most lovely maiden, reading, in a bower of leaves, and visible by he knew not what magic light. She was all white, her fine face white as marble; her garments like moonlight modestly covering her from throat to foot; her eyes were on

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her book; only her rich, dark hair, in which golden light seemed to lie hidden, gave any colour to her motionless form. Otto watched her long with reverent surprise, until she lifted her head and looked on him gently. Then he blushed and said, 'Lady, forgive me, I intruded unwittingly.' But as he turned to go, a voice sweeter than the low song of a new-born mountain-spring, recalled him,—

'I thought you would come ere long.'

Throbbing with hope and wonder, the youth modestly advanced with a natural noble courtesy. Though of humble birth, he had the manners and the heart of a prince. The lady, closing her book, laid it by as though it were a part of her life that had now come to an end. Before the twain parted, the lady gave to Otto her word to meet him there again on the morrow, and for many morrows they met. She was a fairy, but wiser and better than her kinsfolk, and, studying much in elfin lore, she had learned that a fairy should one day be born who was doomed to suffer torments, eternally chained to the terrible *Teufelsbrücke*, unless before the close of a certain year she should obtain baptism at the hands of a holy abbot, and marry a Christian youth, and that she herself was that unhappy being. The fatal year was come, and thus, when Otto appeared before her hidden bower, she knew that he or none should save her.

When Otto heard the tale he vowed his prayers should move his uncle to the salvation of the elfin lady's soul. But as he wended his tedious way over the heights which part Urseren from the valley in which Dissentis is situated, fears and doubts beset him, and when he reached the abbey all were but too fully realised. The Abbot vowed by his patron saint, which is equal to the swearing of less holy men, that no act of his should snatch the cowl from his nephew, and again he proved from books of vast age and sanctity that to baptize a fairy was a thing not permitted of holy Church. Otto could obtain no hope of mercy, and departed under his relative's high displeasure.

'Should you carry your prayer to any of my reverend and holy brethren, the neighbouring abbots—piff! you were as well blown from the face of the earth. All my spiritual weapons shall be against you.' So he spake instead of a parting blessing.

Otto wended his way home in a sorry mood, when, suddenly, a thought flashed into his mind. He remembered that when the good Abbot had said 'Piff!' he had daintily put to his lips four fingers and a thumb of which any duchess might have been proud, and parting them, blew them off, as it were, into space. He remembered the holy man's weakness, and that the day was at hand when the white gloves must be presented. He, Otto, was chosen to carry them to Dissentis this year. Could he obtain a pair finer than any which had been hitherto given in tribute, his uncle might begin to relent

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towards him. Perhaps his fairy bride could help him. When he told her of his thought, she smiled upon him brightly.

* * * * * *

The tribute-day came; the Chapter was met in solemn conclave, and my lord Abbot on his carven seat was twiddling his white thumbs until the procession should arrive from Urseren. A mountain-horn sounded at the gate. The wealthiest of the dalesmen entered with rustic gifts, and in their midst Otto the Handsome, in a green jerkin with silver tassels, and the gloves laid on a charger in his hand. They were presented in form, on bended knee. My lord Abbot drew on the first, and his furrowed brow grew clear; the second, and turning to his nephew he signed him to approach, and kissed him between the eyes with these words, 'Peace be with thee, my son. Sure never were such gloves seen before in Switzerland. Ask of me what thou wilt; it is granted.' Trembling, yet radiant, Otto withdrew, the Abbot still regarding his gloves. They were indeed marvellous with broidery, small gems, and golden thread. But he knew not that their subtle perfume was a fairy essence, and that he himself, holy man! was bewitched.

Otto reappeared, and led by the hand the beautiful White Lady. With priestly grace, the Abbot rose and kissed her brow. 'By mine head,' he cried '(now the holy Saints forgive me), by Saint Placidus himself, I vow this lady is too fair to be a heathen; and maybe,' he added, with a pleasant smile, fingering his own well-shaped chin, 'thou, mine Otto, art too handsome for a monk. Be it as thou wilt; I have no further wish to hinder thee from so fair a wife.'

BELLINZONA.

Bellinzona is, alternately with Lugano and Locarno, the capital of the canton Ticino. Its situation at the junction of the great roads leading over the St. Gothard and St. Bernardino Passes to the fertile plain of Lombardy has always made it a thriving, commercial town and an important strategic position. The Swiss obtained possession of it and the adjacent territory for a nominal sum paid to its feudal lord, whose ancestors had won it from the Dukes of Milan. Disregarding this purchase, Philip Maria Visconti, on the first favourable opportunity, captured Bellinzona, and, in the battle of Arbedo (1422), drove the Swiss from the Leventina. They, however, twice re-captured it, 'by the help of God and their halberts;' and from the beginning of the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century it was governed in a most despotic manner by the

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Mills at Lauis.

Urkantone. The three castles which form so picturesque a feature in the general appearance of the town, were the residences of the three *Landvögte* appointed by these cantons. The largest of the three on an isolated eminence

Approach to Bellinzona.

to the west of the town, known as *Il Castello Grande*, belonged to Uri; on the opposite hill stands *Il Castello di Mezzo*, the residence of the Schwyz

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Landvögt; and, higher up, *Il Castello Corbario*, which belonged to Unterwalden. The first of these is now used as a prison; access is easily gained to it, and it commands a singularly beautiful view. The other two castles are more or less in ruins. There is but little in the town itself to detain the visitor. (*See* p. 56.)

THE LAGO MAGGIORE AND THE LAKE OF ORTA.

The Lago Maggiore, though the longest, is not the largest, of the Italian lakes, as it is exceeded in surface by the Lake of Garda. In point of beauty it almost, if not quite, rivals the Lake of Como; both are so exquisite that it would be difficult fairly to adjust their rival claims for superiority.

To enjoy thoroughly the scenery on this or any of the neighbouring lakes, the chief towns and villages on its shores should be visited and short excursions made into the adjoining country. Haste is fatal to a thorough appreciation of all the beauties of Nature which here crowd together; above all, weariness of body detracts greatly from one's power of enjoyment. Let the traveller then not be too anxious to be up and doing; but let him learn from the people he will now see around him the true meaning of *dolce far niente*. A steam-boat is considered by many a most unromantic, unpoetic conveyance, assimilating but ill with transparent blue water edged with green sloping mountains. A 'shallop flitting silken sailed,' a gondola cleaving the water in long regular pulsations, or a skiff with the alternate rattle of oars and the musical drip of the water from them, either of these might be thought a more pleasing means of locomotion. It may, however, be fairly argued that there is poetry to be found even in a steam-boat; and that a shallop is rather an awkward vessel in a sudden squall. On these Italian lakes both steam and oars may be found ready to keep the traveller on his way. The one he will find most useful, the other most delightful. Let him by no means keep to the deck of the steamer; but when he has reached the end of his day's journey let him take a small boat, and resign all care of it to the boatman, or lazily move the oars himself 'at his own sweet will,' having previously shipped a plentiful cargo of figs, or peaches, or grapes. Few things are more delightful than an hour spent in this way in the delicious atmosphere, and exquisitely chastened light, of an Italian evening:—

'On the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper, one good-night carol more.'

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The outlines of the surrounding mountains become more and more sharply defined against the sky, which even in the depth of night remains partially luminous; while, as the evening closes in, lights twinkling here and there along the shore and doubling themselves in the water, take away all sense of desolation.

The lower portion of the valley of the Ticino lying between Bellinzona and the Lago Maggiore is of a totally different character from the upper valley. A broad and well-wooded expanse succeeds to the narrow ravine hemmed in by mountains, and the character of the soil, which is everywhere well cultivated, shows that at some remote period the waters of the lake must have extended over this region. Villas are seen here and there dotting the lower slopes of the vine-clad hills, and there is a general air of comfort and prosperity. The lowlands near the river are, however, marshy and pestilential.

From Bellinzona there is a choice of three routes. One crosses the Ticino by the long bridge on the west of the town, and proceeds at the foot of the hills round the head of the Lake to Locarno. The second keeps on the left bank of the river, following its curve to the west, and near the village of *Cadenazzo* divides into two branches, one of which proceeds to *Magadino* on the eastern shore of the lake; the other runs due south to *Lugano* (p. 46). If this latter route be taken splendid views will be obtained of Bellinzona and the Lago Maggiore from the slope of *Monte Cenere*, up which the road winds through luxurious chestnut-woods. Should a more extended view be desired, embracing the chief range of the Alps and the plain of Lombardy, it may be had by ascending *Monte Camoghè*, which lies due east of Monte Cenere. The most convenient route will, however, be found to be that leading to *Magadino*, where the steam-boat may be taken for visiting the various places of interest on either shore of the lake.

Magadino has but few attractions in itself, though, like all the villages on the borders of the Italian lakes, it has a certain picturesqueness, and the neighbouring hills command pleasant views of the lake. *Locarno* on the opposite shore is a place of greater importance, as it divides with Bellinzona and Lugano the honour of being alternately the capital of the Swiss Canton, Ticino. The whole character of the place is, however, thoroughly Italian; and in ludicrous contrast to the avowed democratic opinions both of the Canton itself and of Switzerland, the most punctilious distinctions of rank here obtain. No less than seven grades or classes are observed; first come the *Nobili*, *Borghesi*, and *Terrieri*, who constitute the higher ranks of society, and enjoy certain worthless privileges; then follow the *Oriondi*, or Swiss settlers, the *Sessini*, or peasants, and lastly, the *Quatrini* and *Mensualisti*, foreign settlers in the town. As might be supposed from these senseless

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distinctions, the government of Locarno has always been intolerant. In the fourteenth century it was a flourishing town, but it gave the death-blow to its own prosperity by driving from it in the beginning of the sixteenth century those citizens who had embraced the principles of the Reformation. The exiles settled in Zürich, and there, like the French refugees in Spitalfields on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, established silk-mills, which now play a most important part in the commerce of that flourishing city.

EXCURSIONS FROM LOCARNO.

There are several fine excursions to be made from Locarno; the first is to the convent of *La Madonna del Sasso*, which stands on a steep rock overhanging the town, whence lovely views of the lake and neighbourhood may be obtained. A more extended walk leads through *Ascona*, situated on that side of the delta of the *Melezza* opposite to Locarno, and thence by the side of the lake to the little village of *Ronco*. This road also abounds in fine views, and the botanist will find his attention fully occupied.

A still more lengthy excursion, abounding in grand scenery, may be made up the *Val Maggia*. Two days should, if possible, be devoted to this. A glance at the map will show that at least four great valleys, branching into many smaller ones, converge to the head, or to the western side, of the Lago Maggiore. There is first the *Leventina*, drained by the Ticino, which descends from the summit of the St. Gothard. Eastward of this lies the *Val Mesocco*, descending from the San Bernardino Pass, and drained by the *Moesa*, which joins the Ticino a little above Bellinzona. Of these two great channels through which access is gained to Italy from the centre and east of Switzerland, the Leventina is the most interesting, and presents the finest scenery. Westward of it lies a third great valley—the *Val Maggia*—drained by the Maggia, which falls into the Melezza near to Locarno. This valley, with its branches traced upwards from the lake, leads into grand mountain districts, as yet but imperfectly known, but no direct communication between Switzerland and Italy is found through it. The fourth great valley is that of the *Tosa* (*Toccia* or *Toce*), which enters the deep bay formed in the western shore of the Lago Maggiore. This river descends from the *Gries Pass*, and flowing through the beautiful *Val Formazza*, is joined a few miles above *Domo d'Ossola* by the *Diveria*, descending from the *Simplon*, and a few miles below the same town by the *Anza*, which drains the lovely *Val Anzasca*, and flows from the very foot of Monte Rosa. The valley of the Di-

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Magadino.

veria and the lower portion of the valley of the Tosa thus, by means of the great Simplon Road, forms an easy communication between North Italy and the valley of the Upper Rhine.

The Val Maggia may be ascended in a carriage as far as *Cevio* or *Bignasco*, either of which villages will form good head-quarters for making excursions into the numerous lateral valleys which here join the main one. Should the traveller not wish to return to Locarno by the same road that he came, he may, with the assistance of a guide, push over the mountains to the west, and descend into the Leventina, or proceed westward into the Val Formazza.

Canobbia.

Canobbia, one of the most flourishing villages on the lake, stands on Italian territory, at the mouth of the *Val Canobbina*, which presents some fine scenery.

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The village church, with its slender campanile, was designed by Bramante, and contains some frescoes by Gaudenzio Ferrari.

Before reaching *Cannero* the lake is narrowed considerably by a jutting promontory from the west coast. The two small islands immediately in front of this were, in the fifteenth century, the resort of five robber brothers, named Mazzarda, who ravaged the neighbouring shores. Cannero itself is charmingly situated among vineyards and olive-yards; and both shores of the lake now present a succession of picturesque villages and villas, each of which, 'sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill, sparkles like a grain of salt.'

After touching at *Luino*, whence a good road runs to Lugano, the steamboat rounds the projecting base of the *Sasso del Ferro*, and reaches the little bay of *Laveno*, situated at the point where the lake attains its greatest width. The neighbourhood of Laveno is most picturesque, and from the Sasso del Ferro, which is easily ascended, the peak of Monte Rosa may be discerned.

Opposite Laveno lie *Intra* and *Pallanza*, two small but flourishing towns, separated by a small promontory. Pallanza occupies the site of an old Roman town, and several interesting remains have been found here. West of the town the shore of the lake makes a deep bay, at the head of which the turbulent Tosa is received.

On the shore of this inlet, opposite Pallanza, lies Baveno.

EXCURSIONS FROM BAVENO OR PALLANZA.

Either of these towns will form a convenient starting-point for those who may wish to visit the valley of the Tosa, or the valleys connected with it. The most beautiful and most easily accessible of these is unquestionably the Val Anzasca, which leads from the Tosa due west to the foot of Monte Rosa. A carriage should be taken as far as *Vogogna*, whence it is a good day's walk to the head of the valley at *Macugnaga*. The views throughout the ascent are superb, 'combining all that is most lovely in Italian, with all that is most grand in Swiss scenery. It is a Chamouni of which the sides are covered with vines, figs, chestnuts, and walnuts, with the sky of Italy above, and the architecture of Italy around you.' The view of Monte Rosa from Macugnaga is unsurpassed in the Alps.

The scenery of this valley, and the appearance and special characteristics of its inhabitants, have been well described by Mr. Brockedon in his 'Excursions in the Alps.' He says, 'The immediate scenery of the upper part of this beautiful

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valley, where from its depth the lofty mountains were hid from my view, reminded me of some of the sweetest scenes of Devonshire. But the path soon rose above the left bank of the river and attained a considerable elevation, and I perceived that, except in a few limited spots at the upper end of the valley, and here and there on the steep sides of the mountains, there was no land to cultivate. Extensive forests of chestnut and walnut trees, fine in form and rich in colour, clothed the hills as far up as the eye could perceive them (except where lofty and distant mountains peered above), and descended far beneath the traveller's path, to where it met the opposite slope, scarcely appearing to leave room enough for the river to struggle through, and of which glimpses were rarely caught. This was the general character of the valley. From a chapel at Cimamorga in the road near Ceppo Morelli there is a very striking view: in it all the beautiful characteristics of the scenery seemed to be assembled—the river far beneath, struggling through its narrow bed; the majestic forests, which clothed the mountain sides, among which was sometimes seen a village church or a group of cottages; and the vista towards the Alps terminated by the vast and beautiful peaks of Monte Rosa.

'I was much struck by the appearance of the inhabitants of this valley. I rarely saw a plain woman: their beautiful faces and fine forms, their look of cheerfulness and independence, and, what in Piedmont was more remarkable, their extreme cleanliness, continually arrested attention.

'The Anzascans are aware that they have a reputation for cleanliness and beauty, and they are justly proud of it. Whilst I was taking refreshment at Vanzone, the principal town in the valley, I mentioned to the inn-keeper (rather, a sort of keeper of a chandler's shop) the impression which the people of the valley had made upon me. He seemed delighted at my having noticed the fine women and their cleanliness, and said that what I had seen was not sufficient to do them justice. "Come," said he, "into our valley on a festa: see our women on Sunday next, at San Carlo, the village below there, which you see in the valley: all the world will be there. In Upper Val Sesia they boast of their women, but they are not to be compared to ours."'

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THE BORROMEAN ISLANDS.

South of Pallanza is a chain of four islets of world-wide fame, the *Borromean Islands*, named from the illustrious family Borromeo, to whom their celebrity is due.

The most northern island, the *Isola San Giovanni*, belongs to the canons of Pallanza. Upon it are a chapel, a house, and well-kept gardens, to which admission may be easily gained. The third island of the chain, the *Isola dei Pescatore*, belongs to the poor fishermen who inhabit it; while the second and fourth islands, the *Isola Madre* and the *Isola Bella*, are the property of the Borromean family. In the year 1671, Count Vitalio Borromeo built a palace on the Isola Bella, and converted the barren rock into stately gardens, rising by ten terraces high above the surface of the lake. The slaty character of the native rock enables plants whose habitat is the extreme south of Europe to grow luxuriantly here. Not only do lemon-trees, oranges, magnolias, oleanders, pomegranates, flourish in profusion, but also aloes, coffee-plants, sugar-canes, and camphor-trees. Mixed with these are long lines of obelisk-like cypresses, statues, and vases. To bring about all this transformation, large sums of money were expended, and every handful of earth for the garden had to be brought from a distance. The effect which all this stiff and studied grandeur produces on the mind will differ with the temperament of each visitor; but all will agree, that nothing can be more charming than the situation and *entourage* of this wonderful spot. The palace, a richly-decorated building, is now partially in ruins. It contains a considerable number of pictures, none, however, of any great value; and the domestic chapel has some interesting monuments. In strange contrast to all the splendour around, the favourite Borromean motto, '*Humilitas*,' surmounted by a coronet everywhere meets the eye. The *Isola Madre* is also laid out in terraces, and on its northern slope is an English garden.

The Borromean family, though originally Tuscan, had its most important branch in Lombardy. Among its most distinguished members may be noticed *Carlo*, commonly called *San Carlo* (died 1584), whose body may still be seen enshrined in his glorious cathedral of Milan, and his cousin *Federigo*, Archbishop of Milan (died 1631), usually known as *Cardinal Borromeo*, 'who in a decadent age, reached a pitch of holiness which few have exceeded, and wrought everywhere around him a marvellous work of social and spiritual renovation.'* *His* shrine is Manzoni's fine novel *I Promessi Sposi*, in which his self-denying devotion during the great plague in Milan is admirably

* Bishop of Oxford.—'Addresses to Candidates for Ordination.'

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Pallanza.

portrayed. 'Federigo,' says this writer, 'was among those characters, rare in whatever age, who have employed singular talents, all the resources of great wealth, all the advantages of privileged rank, and an unwearying diligence in the search and exercise of the highest objects and principles. His life resembles a rivulet which, rising limpid from the rock, flows in a ceaseless and unruffled, though lengthened course, through various lands, and, clear and limpid still, falls at last into the ocean.'*

To Federigo Borromeo Milan is also indebted for the foundation of the celebrated Ambrosian Library.

South of the Borromean Islands, the shores of the Lago Maggiore lose that grandeur which the more northern portion possesses, though the scene

The Borromean Islands.

before one's eye is always smiling and delightful. It would, therefore, be well

* '*I Promessi Sposi*,' chap. xxii.

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to land at *Stresa* (which is reached soon after passing the Borromean Islands), for the purpose of visiting the charming little Lake of Orta, which lies a few miles to the west of the Lago Maggiore, from which it is separated by the picturesque mass of *Monte Motterone* (or *Monterone*). There is a charming walk (of seven hours) over this ridge from Stresa to Orta, along which delightful views may be had of the Lago Maggiore and the Lake of Orta. A slight *détour* of about an hour will take the traveller to the highest peak of the Monte Monterone (*Margozzolo*, 4500 feet), from which a more extended panorama is visible, embracing Monte Rosa and the adjacent Alpine chains, the Plain of Lombardy with the Duomo of Milan in its midst, and several of the north Italian lakes. In the descent three or four small villages are passed before the main road to Orta is struck within a mile of that town.

Should this route not be taken, there is a good carriage-road from *Baveno* through *Gravellona* to *Omegna*, at the head of the Lake of Orta. Orta itself may be reached either by road or by boat, or a landing may be made at *Pella*, on the western shore of the lake, for the purpose of visiting the famous place of pilgrimage, *Varallo*, in the *Val di Sesia*. The path from Pella leads over the *Col de Colma*, through a well-wooded and fertile country, abounding in fine views, while from the summit of the Col is another extensive panorama.

Varallo is delightfully situated among richly wooded slopes descending to the river Sesia. It, however, derives its importance, not from its picturesque position, but from the sanctuary on the *Sacro Monte—La Nuova Gerusalemme nel Sacro Monte di Varallo*, in full—which rises immediately above the town. This singular place originated in the zeal of a Milanese noble, Bernardino Caimo, who, in 1486, obtained from the then Pope a faculty to found a sanctuary here. The piety of succeeding generations added to the original work of the founder, and at the present time no less than fifty chapels or oratories, besides a large church, are found disposed on the hill-side. The oratories contain groups of figures, modelled in terra-cotta, clothed and arranged on the floors, so as to represent various scenes in Biblical history,—chiefly scenes from the life of Christ. The groups which represent the Fall of Man, the Visitation, the Murder of the Holy Innocents, the Transfiguration, and the Road to Calvary, specially deserve notice; as many as sixty figures, the size of life, being introduced into some. Frescoes adorn many of the walls. The groups of statuary are, as it were, framed in by façades or porticoes, many of which have considerable architectural pretension. As might be supposed in so vast an assemblage of figures and paintings, the art displayed in them varies greatly; many are refined in taste, and show

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considerable merit in their execution; others are rendered grotesque by the addition of real drapery and real hair, and will excite but little, if any admiration.

On the Sacro Monte will also be found an exact reproduction of the *Scala Santa* at St. John Lateran at Rome. Plenary indulgence was conceded by Pope Clement XIII., to all who should climb the twenty-eight steps on their hands and knees, say an *Ave*, a *Pater*, and a *Gloria* at each step, and kiss each step devoutly. Many pilgrims may be seen performing this strange act of devotion, especially on the 'gaudy day' of Varallo—the Feast of the Assumption, August 15. Like most pilgrimage places, the Sacro Monte and its neighbourhood swarm with beggars, and are crowded with stalls and booths, where small souvenirs, such as crosses, rings, &c. can be obtained. Despite the pestering and many annoyances to which the traveller will have to submit, the place well deserves an extended and careful visit.

It may not be uninteresting to glance at the order of these singular and quasi-artistic objects.

1. The Fall of Man.
2. The Annunciation.
3. The Visitation.
4. The Angel announcing to Joseph the Miraculous Conception.
5. The Star of the East.
6. The Nativity.
7. Joseph and Mary adoring Christ.
8. The Presentation in the Temple.
9. The Angel advising Joseph to fly into Egypt.
10. The Flight.
11. The Murder of the Innocents.
12. The Baptism in the Jordan.
13. The Temptation.
14. Christ and the Woman of Samaria.
15. Christ curing the Paralytic.
16. Christ raising the Widow's Son.
17. The Transfiguration.
18. The Raising of Lazarus.
19. The Entrance into Jerusalem.
20. The Last Supper.
21. Christ in the Garden.
22. Christ finds His Disciples Sleeping.
23. Christ betrayed by Judas.
24. Christ in the house of Annas.
25. Christ in the hands of Caiaphas.
26. The Repentance of S. Peter.
27. Christ in the house of Pilate.
28. Christ in the house of Herod.
29. Christ reconducted to Pilate.
30. The Flagellation.
31. Christ crowned with Thorns.
32. Christ again conducted to Pilate
33. Christ shown to the People.
34. Pilate washing his hands.
34. Christ sentenced to death.
36. Christ bearing the Cross.
37. Christ nailed to the Cross.
38. The Crucifixion.
39. Christ taken down from the Cross.
40. The Pietà—the Women around the body of Christ.
41. The Body wrapped in Linen.
42. San Francesco.
43. Christ lying in the Sepulchre.
44. Saint Anne.
45. An Angel announcing to the Virgin Mary her Translation to Heaven.
46. The Sepulchre of the Virgin.

A story on the subject of this Sacro Monte will be found on page 60.

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Orta is delightfully placed on a small promontory on the eastern shore of the lake which is named from it. Behind the town there is a sanctuary somewhat similar to that at Varallo, but on a much less extensive scale. Twenty-two oratories, dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi, are distributed over a hill known, as at Varallo, as the *Sacro Monte*. The architecture of many of these chapels is very elegant, and the groups of terra-cotta which they contain have considerable merit. The slopes of the hill are charmingly laid out in gardens, and the view from the summit is a very fine one.

Opposite the town of Orta, the beautiful rocky islet known as the *Isola di San Giulio*, rises from the blue waters of the lake. Upon it stands the small town of San Giulio, the church of which is of considerable antiquity. The spot on which it is built was rendered sacred by being made the retreat of St. Julius, who came from Greece, in 379, to convert the inhabitants of this district to Christianity. It contains many fine porphyry pillars, a mosaic pavement, some ancient frescoes and bas-reliefs, and in the sacristy a Madonna by Gaudenzio Ferrari.

As the southern extremity of the Lago Maggiore is approached, the banks become gradually flatter. After passing *Belgirate* and *Lesa*, Monte Rosa may be seen towards the west. *Arona* is the last station for the lake steamers, and, long before reaching it, the colossal statue of San Carlo is seen, with the right hand extended towards the town, in the act of benediction. This gigantic statue is 66ft. in height, the pedestal on which it stands being 40ft. Only the head, hands, and feet are cast in bronze; the rest of the figure being formed of sheets of beaten copper, skilfully disposed, the whole being supported by a rude column of masonry. It was erected, in 1697, by subscription. Visitors can enter the statue, and, if so disposed, climb into the head, and even sit in the nose; but the ascent is tedious and laborious, owing to the great heat and the number of bats which take up their abode in the interior. The general effect of the whole, especially as seen from the lake, is dignified and impressive.

MILAN AND THE CERTOSA DI PAVIA.

MILAN is within such easy reach of Arona—thanks to the railroad—that, unless very much pressed for time, the tourist will do well to devote two or three days to an excursion there, and return to the lake district at Como. The city is not only one of the very finest in Italy, but would rank high when compared with any of the great European towns. It is full of objects

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Orta.

of the greatest interest. Its cathedral (*Duomo*) is famous far and wide; the Church of *St. Ambrose* abounds in antiquities, the splendid golden altar frontal being among its chief treasures, while in the refectory attached to the Church of *Santa Maria delle Grazie* is preserved all that remains of the wondrous *Cenacolo*, or Last Supper of Leonardo da Vinci, one of the most marvellous

Island of San Giulio.

of the many rich legacies bequeathed to posterity by Italian art of the sixteenth century. Milan has many other things which may long detain the

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visitor. But it would be unadvisable to leave the neighbourhood without seeing another great monument of mediæval and renaissance art, but little known, and rarely visited by English tourists,—the *Certosa di Pavia*, a splendid monastery, undoubtedly the finest in the world. It may now be easily reached in less than an hour, by rail from Milan.

Another short railway journey will bring the traveller to *Camerlata*, within a couple of miles of Como.

FROM THE LAGO MAGGIORE TO THE LAKE OF COMO.

Should the above excursion not be taken, a charming journey may be made by ascending the Lago Maggiore again, as far as *Laveno*, and crossing the hilly region which lies between that place and the town of Como. A fairly good pedestrian can walk the distance in a day, but a convenient half-way house will be found at the pleasant little town of *Varese*. 'The route lies through very beautiful scenery, and is of peculiar interest to geologists, not only on account of the relations of the stratified rocks, but also for the extensive remains of former glacial action, seen throughout a great part of the space between the Lago Maggiore and the lake of Como. The low hills enclosing the lakes of Varese, Comabbio, and Monate, appear to be in great part, if not exclusively, moraines, deposited by the great glaciers of the Tessin that once occupied the bed of the Lago Maggiore; and those lakes apparently owe their existence to these ancient moraines, which retain the streams that would otherwise find their way to the Tessin or the Po.'*

In the lake of Varese, too, were discovered, in 1863, many remains of ancient lake dwellings, with flint weapons and other implements, similar to those of the Swiss lakes, which have excited so much interest of late years. At low water, the piles, &c., may still be seen *in situ*.

At Varese there is another *Sacro Monte*, which commands an admirable view.

* Ball, 'The Central Alps.'

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THE LAKE OF COMO.

The physical characteristics of this lovely lake have been well described by Mr. Ball, in his book on the Central Alps: 'The form of this lake is very peculiar, being that of a Y reversed. Of the two southern arms or legs, the eastern branch extending to Lecco, is the true outlet, while the western branch leading to Como is an enclosed bay. During the glacial period, when a great glacier filled each arm of the lake, the ice rose high enough to overflow the comparatively low barrier south of the town of Como; and the flanks of the hills near Camerlata, still bear evidence of the passage of some portion of the glacier in that direction. A writer well acquainted with the charms of this far-famed lake risks falling into hyperbole, while it must be owned that those who see it for the first time sometimes experience a sensation akin to disappointment. The great height of the adjoining mountains is not at first fully apprehended, and their effect is to dwarf its apparent dimensions, and give to it something of the character of a river. But if it be true that the sheet of water lying between the opposite heights is in some degree intermediate between a great river and a narrow lake, it may challenge comparison for the beauty and grandeur of its scenery, with any other river or lake. The lesser mountains along the lake-shore seldom rise to less than 5000 feet above the level of the water, while the greater peaks attain a relative height of from 7000 to 8000 feet. These proportions, which are matched by but two or three of the smaller Alpine lakes, are here combined with wondrous variety of form, presenting contrasts that can scarcely be equalled elsewhere, and with a luxuriance of southern vegetation that has no rival except on the other two great lakes of the Italian Alps. This holds on the south side of the Alps the same place that belongs to the lake of Lucerne among those of Switzerland, and, according to the taste of each traveller, he may prefer the one or the other, unless, like the present writer, he should divide the palm between them. Here the stranger finds not only the richer vegetation of the South, but also the outward form of Italian life. Massive houses of substantial masonry replace the wooden galleries and spreading roofs of the Swiss rural dwellings; while villas, some of them approaching the scale of palaces, are crowded together on many parts of the lake-shore. The bright green meadows, so characteristic of the mountain slopes surrounding most of the Swiss lakes, here give place to the varied shades of grey and brown that are blended into the green of the mountain pictures of the South.

'Como is throughout a mountain lake, but it presents three distinct regions

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that have few common characteristics. The broader northern arm is the most Alpine in character. The *Monte Spluga*, backed by the *Punta Trubinesca*, and other snowy peaks at the head of the *Val Masino*, form a background rivalling in height, though not in grandeur of form, that presented at the head of the lake of Geneva. Although there are many large villages on either shore, this part of the lake is little visited by strangers; and though it abounds in sites that can scarcely be surpassed elsewhere, there are but few villas. These are crowded together on the Como branch of the lake. This is the favourite resort of the wealthy nobility of Lombardy, and of very many strangers who have sought a retreat on these charming shores. The Lecco branch of the lake exhibits the extreme of wildness and ruggedness. The narrow space along the edge of the water affords room for a few small villages, but behind them the mountains rise so boldly as to leave no space for cultivation. On the eastern shore the rocks are ranged tier over tier, backed by the bare grey precipices of the *Grigna*, while on the opposite side the declivity is more unbroken, but the mountains do not attain an equal height.'

Como is a small thriving town, strikingly placed on the western branch of the lake named from it. There are many objects in it to detain the visitor for a few hours, and foremost among these must be reckoned its fine cathedral. This is wholly built of marble, in a great variety of style, as the existing fabric was begun in 1396, and the dome was not completed till 1732. The exterior abounds in fine statues and bas-reliefs, while the interior, with its lofty vaulting, presents a fine specimen of Italian pointed architecture, mixed with the style of the *cinquecento*. Some good paintings by Luini and Gaudenzio Ferrari are preserved here.

Close by the cathedral stands another striking building, the *Broletto*, or Town-hall, built in the fine Italian style of the thirteenth century, of alternate courses of black and white marble. The columns and open arches of the lower story are particularly elegant. These support a large room with round-headed corridors, and from the central one projects the rostrum or balcony (*ringhiera*), from which it was customary for the municipal authorities to address the citizens assembled in parliament below. For Como was for a couple of centuries, until it fell under the power of the Visconti, lords of Milan, a free republic, thoroughly democratic in constitution.

The triangular space enclosed by the southern branches of the lake of Como is a district but little visited by tourists; yet it abounds in most interesting and beautiful scenery and exquisite views, both of the eastern and western arms of the lake. A good road, forming the base of this triangle, runs from Como to Lecco, and from this another branches out northwards, near Erba, and runs to the apex of the triangle, at Bellaggio. (See page 50.) By straying

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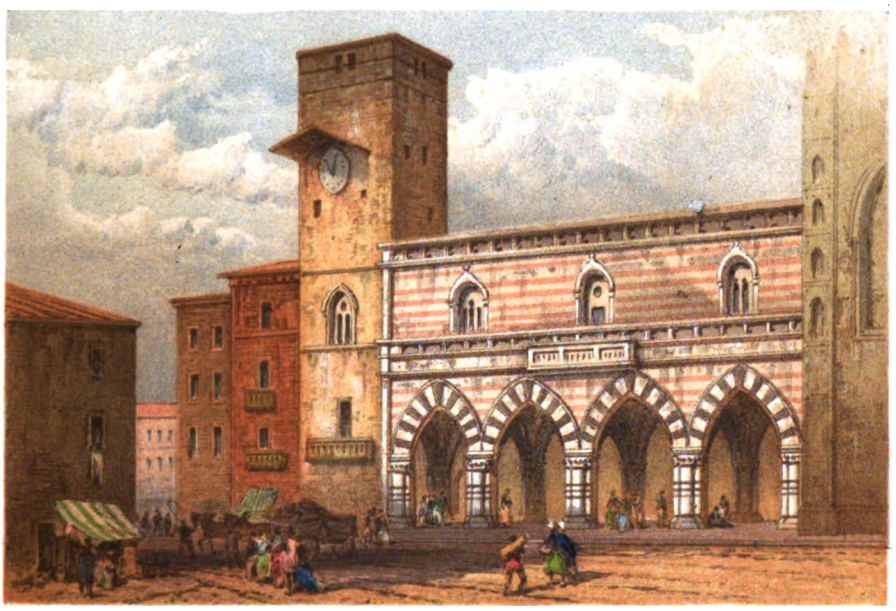
Como Cathedral.

a little away from these roads, delightful walks may be taken through a most fertile and hilly region, on which Nature seems to have lavished all her best gifts. The general elevation of this beautiful district is not great, though at its highest point, Monte San Primo, it attains 5000 feet above the sea level. The distance between Como and Lecco is under twenty miles, and the road between the two is daily traversed by a diligence. On leaving Como, by the Milan Gate, the route gradually ascends. Though the view of the city itself is obstructed by the beautifully wooded *Monte San Maurizio*, yet delightful peeps are gained on looking back during the whole of the rise. The road soon enters an undulating region, covered with meadows and clumps of



Brolette, at Como.

trees, known as the *Brianza*, 'the Garden of Lombardy,' a favourite resort

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of the rich Milanese, whose villas are profusely scattered throughout it. There is consequently a pleasing view before the traveller at every point, and the landscape is still further relieved by many small lakes with which this district abounds, the chief being those of *Pusiano* and *Annone*. Near *Cassano* a campanile may be seen, which, like those of Pisa and Bologna, is considerably out of the perpendicular. On nearing *Erba* there is a splendid prospect over the Brianza, and looking towards Lecco, the fine peaks called the *Corni di Canzo*, and the serrated ridge, *Il Resegone*, stand up boldly.

Erba lies on a small plain dotted with villas. There is nothing very noteworthy in the town itself, but three miles to the north is a remarkable cavern, known as the *Buca del Piombo*, which affords abundant evidence of having at one time served as a place of refuge and defence. *Lecco* is a thriving town—'un gran borgo al giorno d'oggi, e che s'incammina a diventar città'—picturesquely placed near the end of the eastern arm of the lake at the point where it takes the form of a river, to expand once more after passing the town, in the *Lago di Garlate*. Its position is most graphically described in the opening chapter of Manzoni's 'I Promessi Sposi.'

'Lecco, the chief town of these parts, which gives its name to the territory, lies a little removed from the bridge, on the shore of the lake,—thus, partly on the lake itself where the latter increases: it is already a large town, and on its way to become a city. . . . . From one to the other of these districts, from the heights to the shore, from one slope to the other, ran, and still run, streets and alleys, more or less steep or level; some so deep buried between two walls that, raising your eyes, you only see a bit of sky and some mountain-peak, others as much elevated on open terraces. And hence the eye ranges over prospects more or less extensive, but always rich and new, according as the various points command more or less of the vast circumjacent scene, and according as this or that part displays or contracts itself, appears or disappears in turn. Here one bit, there another; here, again, a long stretch of that wide and varied mirror of water. On this side a lake, closed at the end, or rather squeezed into a group, a *rendezvous* of mountains, and by little and little widening between other mountains which display themselves, one by one, to the eye, and which the water reflects, upside down, with hamlets placed on the brink. On that side, a river; then lake, then river again, losing itself in brilliant windings between mountains which accompany it, gradually diminishing, and lost, like them, on the horizon.'

Talfourd, again, in his delightful 'Vacation Rambles,' thus describes the town and its inhabitants:—'Lecco is a dirty town, with dark, narrow streets; but how "free and easy" life seemed to be in them! At sunset all its population was abroad—not in the meadows, but in the streets—all disporting themselves after their own whim (you cannot call it *will*), the young as if the

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world contained no schoolmaster; the old, as if it owned no empire of opinion; some lounging on benches, drinking lemonade or light wine; some playing cards at low tables placed across the gutters, with hands and cards equally dark; but no drunkenness, no riot, no ill-humour, was seen amidst that dirty, careless race. But the most marvellous thing to me was the extreme vivacity and variety of colour which flashed, and glistened, and deepened, and harmonised in the motley scene. If the vagabonds had all engaged to contribute some bit of colour to the picture; they could not have produced more vivid effects than those which the instinct of their nature shed on their apparel and grouping. No matter whether young or old, shapely or deformed, in decent attire or in rags, all tended to the picturesque; a light-blue cap, a crimson jacket, a scarlet cloak, a green handkerchief, a bunch of ribbons—some bright streak flashed gladness on the scene wherever you glanced, independent of the clear olive complexion and merry black eyes which beamed out among the vagrant crowds. Indoors this love of colour was more elaborately exerted; our inn-rooms were all painted in compartments—walls, ceilings, floor; we had fallen on a coloured world where "motley's your only wear." And surely here the poet's advice, "*ne crede colori*," will be given in vain. Colour, in truth, is the most trustworthy of all appearances; it cannot deceive you, for all that it seems, it is; and unless we have "the inky cloak" on our spirits, we need know nothing but "seems" while we enjoy it.'

Take one passage more from the same writer:—'Our journey from one foot of the great lake at Lecco to the other at Como, though short, had the requisites of an epic poem—an adequate beginning, middle, and end—each distinct, yet all forming a complete whole. The beginning consists of a gradual development and perfect view of Lecco in a basin—almost urn—of rocky mountains, reminding me of that noble circle amidst the highest Scotch hills, with a huge pulpit-like rock in its centre, which opens behind Ballahulish; its middle, a succession of quiet green lanes, like those we enjoy in the midst of England, with views of two small unpretending lakes; its end, a long, majestic, refulgent descent to Como, enthroned at the head of its own lake, here peopled with bright pleasure-boats, with a towering castle for its crown.' An excellent military road, part of the Stelvio route, runs from Lecco all along the eastern shore of the lake of Como. This might be followed with advantage as far as *Varenna*, in order that the sterner shores of the Lecco branch of the lake may be compared with the more cultivated and more populous banks of the western arm. *Abbadia* and *Mandello* are the only villages of importance which are passed in skirting the eastern shore the western shore has but two or three unimportant hamlets upon it. But few boats or barges ply on the Lecco branch, and a steamer is seen there only once in the week.

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Varenna is perhaps the most beautifully situated village on the lake of Como, as it commands a good view along each of the three arms. A row-boat will take the traveller in a very short time across the lake from Varenna to *Menaggio* on the opposite shore, which may be made the starting-point of many interesting excursions, the principal being that to the lake of *Lugano*.

THE LAKE OF LUGANO.

This beautiful sheet of water occupies a sinuous depression among the mountains which lie between the Lago Maggiore and the lake of Como, and the scenery on its shores is singularly varied and picturesque. The road from Menaggio to *Porlezza*, which lies at its eastern extremity, is a good one, and abounds in fine views. Porlezza itself is not an attractive village; but is a place of considerable trade between the region lying round the lake of Como and the canton Ticino. Here the steamboat or a rowboat may be taken for proceeding to Lugano, or the traveller may walk along the track which skirts the northern shore.

Lugano divides with Bellinzona and Locarno the honour of being in turn the capital of the canton Ticino. It is charmingly situated on the margin of the lake named from it, at the point where its northern shore leaves its east and west direction for one due south. The western shore of this southern arm is formed by the *Monte Salvatore*, round which the lake curves to take a due northern direction on the opposite side of the mountain, so that it is almost entirely surrounded by the blue waters.

The chief inn of the place, the Hôtel du Parc, was formerly a convent, and is in itself an object of considerable interest. Near it is the Church of *Santa Maria degli Angioli*, in which is a fine fresco by *Bernardino Luini* (died after 1530), painted on the entrance to the choir. It represents the Crucifixion, and is flanked by figures of two saints, life-size. In the same church is a fine Madonna by the same painter. The façade of the principal church of the town, the Cathedral of *San Lorenzo*, is said to have been built from a design of Bramante. Its portal is richly adorned with sculpture.

The ascent of the Monte Salvatore is the chief excursion to be made from Lugano. The path to the summit is easily found, and those who are disinclined to walk may ride to the top. The panorama is exceedingly beautiful, and includes a great part of the Monte Rosa range, and, in very clear weather, the Cathedral of Milan.

'The Monte Salvatore,' says Mr. Ball, 'is extremely interesting to the geologist. It is formed by the protrusion of a mass of porphyry through

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Varenna from Menaggio.

stratified limestone; and the fact which has excited much attention is the apparent conversion of the latter into dolomite, as it approaches to a junction with the porphyry. This is very well seen by the road leading from Lugano to Melide, on the way to Como.' Two other pleasant excursions are the tour of Monte Salvatore, which may be made either on foot or by boat; and

Porlezza.

the ascent of the *Monte Caprino*, which rises on the southern shore of the lake immediately opposite Lugano.

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A pleasant road of about eighteen miles leads from Lugano to Como. On leaving the former town it skirts the eastern side of Monte Salvatore to the village of *Melide*, where the lake is considerably narrowed by a small promontory. The water here is so shallow that a causeway has been built to connect the two banks. On reaching *Bissone* at the eastern extremity of this causeway, the road runs by the eastern shore of the southern arm of the lake which it leaves at *Capolago*. At *Mendrisio*, a few miles farther on, omnibuses may be procured for Como or Camerlata.

LAKE OF COMO (*continued*).

The chief villages lying on either side of the lake from Como to Menaggio are the following. The country near them all is delightful, and the whole district is thickly studded with villas, to many of which access is easily gained.

Cernobbio (western shore).—The hotel now called *Regina d'Inghilterra*, formerly the *Villa d'Este*, was for some time the residence of Queen Caroline. This village may be made the starting-point for the ascent, an easy one, of *Monte Bisbino*, which rises to the north of it. The view from the summit (4420 feet) is extensive, and stretches as far as Monte Rosa. *Monte Bisbino*, like Pilatus, serves as a barometer to the people of the neighbourhood.

Torno (eastern shore) once rivalled Como in wealth and importance. It was, however, taken and sacked by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, and has never since recovered its former position. In the angle of the little bay, which lies eastward of Torno, stands the *Villa Pliniana*, a large but gloomy structure of the latter part of the sixteenth century. It derives its name from a neighbouring spring, accurately described by Pliny the Younger, which ebbs and flows daily.

Molina (east) lies a short distance from the lake. In its neighbourhood are two waterfalls, the origin of which was due to accident. An engineer, in constructing a mill, removed a large mass of rock, and thus opened a passage for a subterranean stream, which burst out of the mountain side. The two falls are formed in succession—the one is 75 feet, the other 130.

Moltrasio (west).—A good collection of antiquities, found on the shores of the lake, is preserved here in the Villa of Count Passalacqua.

Laglio (west) is principally celebrated for a large pyramid erected to *Joseph Franck*, a professor at Pavia, who left 25,000 francs to immortalise his own memory in this foolish way.

At *Torrigia* (west) is a cavern, *Buca dell' Orso*, in which, some years ago, was found a large number of bones, principally of the cave-bear, which excited

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much interest at the time. There is a similar cavern, the *Grotta della Masceda*, on the hill above *Carena*, on the opposite shore of the lake. *Brienno* (west) abounds in bay-trees, from the fruit of which a costly oil is made.

Nesso (east). There are two villages of this name, distinguished as *Nesso sopra* and *Nesso sotto;* near the latter is a fine waterfall. A route runs from Nesso along the southern slopes of Monte San Primo, and descends into the *Val Assina*, by which *Bellaggio* or *Canzo* may be reached by land (*see* p. 52).

Argegno (west) stands at the mouth of *Val Intelvi*, and may be made the starting-point for exploring that beautiful region and for ascending the *Monte Generoso*.

Some little distance north of Argegno the promontory of *Balbianello* juts into the lake, forming a sheltered bay on the north. *Lenno*, which lies in this recess, has a singular crypt beneath its church.

'Val Intelvi,' to quote again from Mr. Ball's excellent work, 'is the name given to a small district occupying a depression in the mountain range dividing the Lake of Como from the Lake of Lugano. It is not a single valley, but an aggregate of short combes or dells, drained by two streams, of which one falls into each lake. The central portion is a plateau called Piano di S. Rocco, about 1200 feet above the level of the Lake of Como. From thence the ground sinks rapidly on either side, eastward to Argegno, and northward to Osteno on the Lake of Lugano. Although the distance by road between those places scarcely exceeds ten miles, the district has a population of about 11,000 inhabitants, and includes no less than 22 parishes, about half of which lie on the central road, and the remainder in the short lateral valleys that open on either hand. Nowhere but in Italy can a small and remote district such as this boast of having produced so many men distinguished in art. Each village has its roll of worthies, extending back to the early part of the fourteenth century. The cathedrals of Milan, Como, and Monza, the Certosa of Pavia, and many great works at Genoa and Venice, were either originally designed or their building carried out by architects born in these mountain-villages. Isidoro Bianchi and several others of the later Lombard School make up a respectable list of painters, and some names not unknown in literature complete the catalogue.

'The Monte Generoso, or Calvaggione (5561 feet), is a mass of mountains overlooking the southern part of the Lake of Lugano, sloping to the N. and N.E. towards the Val Intelvi, and S.E. towards the Val Muggia. Though now comparatively unknown, it is destined to future celebrity, as travellers shall discover its attractions and find some moderate provision for their comfort. It is accessible with more or less ease in most directions, but the easiest and most convenient route is from the Val Intelvi. The position of the mountain and, to some extent, its form, have provoked comparison with the Rigi,

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which are somewhat misleading, but none who have visited it in moderately favourable weather can fail to rank the view from the summit very high in the catalogue of Alpine panoramas.

Tremezzo (west) is a favourite place of resort for summer visitors. Near it is one of the finest villas on the lake, the *Villa Carlotta*, now the property of the reigning Duke of Saxe Meiningen. In it is preserved a fine freize of bas-reliefs by Thorwaldsen, representing the Triumphs of Alexander. This was originally executed for Napoleon, who is said to have paid a million francs for it. It is accounted as one of the finest of Thorwaldsen's works. Here are also several of the best of Canova's statues, and many specimens of modern sculptors and painters.

Cadenabbia (west) is simply a small group of houses let to visitors.

Bellaggio (east) is from its beauty one of the villages of greatest resort on the lake—'un pezzo di cielo caduto in terra.' Its position is delightful, as it stands near the head of the promontory which divides the two southern arms of the lake, and affords great facilities for exploring both them and the northern limb. The one defect about it is, that the walks in the neighbourhood are necessarily limited in extent; still many of these are most interesting.

The chief lion at Bellaggio is the *Villa Serbelloni*, the beautiful grounds of which extend over the extreme north of the promontory, and command delightful views along the three branches of the lake. Art here assists Nature in the most picturesque manner. Several other villas, among the finest on the lake, lie near Bellaggio. South of the Villa Serbelloni, on the Lecco branch of the lake, stands the *Villa Giulia*, the property of the King of the Belgians. Admittance is gained without difficulty to the grounds, which abound in fine flowers, and command lovely views. On the other arm south of the village lies the new *Villa Frizzoni*, built by a wealthy silk merchant of Bergamo. This is a good specimen of modern Italian domestic architecture. Externally it has a fine appearance, while the arrangement and fitting-up of the interior have been carried out in correct taste. Some good pictures by old masters are shown here. Still further south, and almost rivalling the Villa Carlotta in magnificence, the *Villa Melzi* stands close to the lake. Though somewhat heavy in its general aspect, the interior is a good specimen of an Italian villa, and is decorated with numerous works of art, copies of antique busts by Canova, and specimens of modern Italian artists. The walls of many of the large rooms are decorated with frescoes. The Italians are among those who 'in trim gardens take their pleasure;' and there are few gardens better laid out or better kept than those surrounding this house. Many shrubs, which usually require a much lower latitude, here flourish luxuriantly—such as magnolias, camellias, aloes, and some exquisite conifers.

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Bellaggio.

EXCURSIONS FROM BELLAGGIO.

The triangular space lying between the two southern arms of the Lake of Como has already been spoken of, and the route lying along its base described, p. 42. An interesting excursion may be made by pushing due south from Bellaggio, so as to strike this base line at Erba; or if this distance (17 miles) should be considered too great, the lake of Lecco may easily be reached by striking off to the left. The return to Bellaggio may then be made in a row-boat. Thus the road from Bellaggio may be followed for a few miles as far as *Civenna*, from which village the lake of Lecco can soon be struck at *Onno*, or the walk may be continued onward down the valley watered by the *Lambro*, the *Val Assina*, to *Asso*, situated about ten miles from Bellaggio. This walk abounds in fine views. The descent to the lake of Lecco may be made by striking

Villa Carlotta.

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north-eastward through *Valbrona;* or, on reaching this village a path may be followed which runs along the shore of the lake to *Onno.* As *Asso* lies in the midst of the triangle of mountains, of which mention has already been made, it would form a pleasing starting-place for many fine walks. The region in which it is situated is well known to the botanist as a prolific field in which many rare plants are to be found. On the *Corno di Canzo* especially, he will find much to repay the labour of the ascent, which may be made from this side without any very great difficulty.

A similar excursion, but in an opposite direction, may be made from *Asso,* by keeping north-west and either ascending the *Monte San Primo* (5200 feet), or traversing the high plateau which lies by its side. The shore of the lake of Como could be reached at *Careno* or *Nesso,* or if the mountain be climbed, a descent might be made direct upon Bellaggio.

A few miles south of *Asso* the highroad joins the one leading from Como to Lecco, near *Erba.*

THE LAKE OF COMO, NORTH OF BELLAGGIO.

The northern arm of the lake of Como, though eminently beautiful, does not possess the same smiling features that are found on the south-western branch. Its surface is less enlivened with gay boats, and its banks with villas, but, on the other hand, the mountains which surround it are more rugged and elevated than those found farther south. Villages are thickly planted along its shores and give a constant animation to the scene. The chief places on the northern arm are the following :—

Menaggio (left), though an important trading place, possesses no very great interest. The Villa Vigoni, on an eminence a short distance from the town, commands a fine view, and contains many works of art, chiefly modern.

Varenna (right) is noted for the beauty of its situation, and has also the reputation of being the hottest place on the lake, while the village of *Bellano,* which lies a few miles to the north of it, passes for the coldest :—

> 'Chi vuol provar pene d'inferno,
> Vada d'està a Varenna, ed a Bellan d'invèrno.'

Cypresses, and orange and lemon-trees here grow luxuriantly. A pleasant stroll may be taken from Varenna to the waterfall known as the *Fiume Latte,* which lies a short distance from the village. It precipitates itself nearly 1000

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feet through a cavern in the rock; and as it is mainly fed by the winter snow lying on the upper ridge of the *Grigna*, it is finest in the spring or early summer. In some years it is in full force in August, but in very hot summers dries up altogether.

The ascent of *La Grigna* (7900 feet), the large mountain mass which lies to the east of the lake of Lecco, may be conveniently made from Varenna. The route lies south-eastward, through the valley of *Esino*, at which village a night may be spent at the house of the *curato*. 'Above Esino,' says Mr. Ball,* 'the track to Val Sassina mounts through a delightful glen, presenting the perfection of park scenery, where the traveller may find his way over soft turf, under the shade of noble chestnut-trees. The higher summits of the Grigna are not in view, or else the scene might rival the choicest spots of the Italian Tyrol. . . . . From the summit† the panorama is very extensive, and includes a great part of the valley of the Po, bounded by the Apennines of Parma and Modena; but the lake of Como does not unfold itself so fully as might be expected. The projecting spurs and lower terraces of the mountain conceal a great part of it from view.'

A descent from the *Grigna* may be made eastward upon *Introbbio* in the *Val Sassina;* and this village forms the best starting-point for the ascent of the southern peak of the *Grigna*, the *Campione*. This and the neighbouring mountains abound in plants which will delight the botanist.

The lake of Como may be again reached from Introbbio by following the Val Sassina downwards to

Bellano (right).—This is a large and important village, with extensive iron-works and silk-factories. The church is large, and contains some good pictures. A short distance up the Val Sassina, which here is open to the lake, there is a fine waterfall—perhaps the most beautiful of the many cascades which are found on the shores of the lake. It is formed by the little mountain stream, the *Pioverna*, by which the beautiful Val Sassina is drained.

Rezzonico (left) is overlooked by the picturesque ruins of a castle of the thirteenth century,

South of Rezzonico, the bold and conspicuous summit known as the *Sasso Rancio* rises nearly 5500 feet. The ancient and decayed roadway,‡ which

* The Central Alps.

† There are two principal summits to La Grigna. The one spoken of in the text is the highest, and is usually called simply *La Grigna;* but by way of distinction *Monte Codeno*, or *Grigna Settentrionale*. The southern peak bears the name *Campione*, or *Grigna Meridionale*, and is some seven hundred feet lower than the northern summit.

‡ The construction of this road, which runs from Gravedona nearly to Como, is ascribed to Theodolinda, Queen of the Lombards; and, from this circumstance, is known as the *Strada Regina*. It cannot now be followed as a continuous route, as it is only practicable in places for wheeled conveyances. But still, though decayed, it is of great value to the inhabitants of the villages lying on the western shore.

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runs along the western shore of the lake, climbs the steep slope of this mountain, and is carried in places with considerable engineering skill along the face of precipitous cliffs which overlook the lake. In the wonderful campaign of 1799 a large body of Russian troops passed along this dangerous road, and many horses and men were precipitated into the lake.

Nearly opposite Rezzonico stands *Dervio* (east), at the mouth of the Varrone, and at the foot of *Monte Legnone* (8500 feet), which, with its continuation, *Monte Legnoncino*, rises with considerable abruptness from the lake. This summit, which commands a fine view, may be ascended from Introbbio or Colico.

Gravedona (west) stands picturesquely at the mouth of the gorge of the *Liro*, which here enters the lake. It is a populous and important village, and its two churches have many points of interest.

The mountains approach very closely to the lake near Gravedona and the neighbouring village of *Domaso*, and charming views are gained by climbing their slopes. In particular, the scene from the church of *La Madonna di Livo*, on the flanks of the Corno di Durin, will well repay the trouble of the ascent.

Colico (east) is one of the termini of the lake steamers; but the village itself has no attractions—indeed, its name is sufficient to deter visitors from staying any longer than is absolutely necessary; while its position on the swampy delta of the Adda makes it unhealthy, though much has been done by improved drainage to render it more salubrious.

THE SPLÜGEN ROUTE—COLICO TO COIRE.

Soon after leaving Colico, the road crosses the mouth of the valley of the Adda, the *Val Tellina* (Ger. *Veltlin*), a large and beautiful valley, which deserves more attention than it usually receives, both from its fine scenery and from its historical associations. After passing the old ruined Spanish fort, *Fuentes*, once the key to the Val Tellina, when Milan and the adjacent territory was subject to Spain, the eastern shore of the *Lago di Mezzola*, or *di Riva*, is skirted. This small sheet of water once formed the northern end of the lake of Como, but the vast accumulation of detritus brought down in the course of ages by the turbulent Adda has formed a dam, which has converted the northern end of the Lake of Como into a separate lake, now simply connected by a narrow channel with the main body of water of which it once formed part.

As the valley of the Meira is ascended, fine mountain views open out; but, though the valley is itself rugged and in parts stern, yet the luxuriant chestnut foliage and the slender *campanili* of the villages give evidence that Italy is not yet quite left behind.

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Chiavenna.

Chiavenna (Ger. *Claven* or *Clefen*), the chief town of the valley, occupies the site of the Roman station *Clavenna*, the *key* to the north of Italy. The graceful bell-tower of the church of San Lorenzo shows well as the town is approached.

Campo Dolcino.

Before reaching *Campo Dolcino* the character of the valley has entirely changed. Everything is now Alpine rather than Italian.

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CATERINA DA BELLINZONA.

In the middle of the eighteenth century the little town of Bellinzona held a jewel of great price—the wonderfully beautiful Caterina. Had she lived in Rome she might have ruled with imperial power. As it was, hidden in a remote town, girt with mountains, she had but rustic lovers at her feet. The two Landvögte, indeed, of Schwyz and Unterwalden paid their homage to the lovely peasant girl, but what were they to the princes of Rome? And the Landvögt in the big castle of Uri was old enough to defy even greater beauty than hers.

Now Ulrich von Halm, the Schwyzer, was gallant and handsome, with a winning air and dress ever *point device;* while Walther von Spitzhof, he of Unterwalden, was ungainly, low and broad in stature, with a misshapen shoulder, and a face which from frequent illness looked black and sour. Ulrich, at the village festivals, would gaily and boldly claim Caterina's hand for the dance, as if he had a right to it, and would wear in his hat the flower snatched with a laugh from her hand. The other never addressed the girl but with a grave and reverential manner; yet she knew, as a woman always does, that his eyes were on her, though he stood in the shade listening to the prattle of old Father Stahller, and she saw, when he gathered up the blue gentianella fallen from her bodice, and hid it in his vest. But to tell the sad truth, Caterina was over much of a coquette, and knowing her power, played with both her lordly lovers, gladdening now one and now the other with a smile or a glance, but grandly scornful when Ulrich dared presume. There was no more presumption in Walther of Spitzhof than in the palsied old Landvögt of Uri.

One night, Caterina's rest under her father's roof was rudely broken. She awoke to find herself gagged, blindfolded, and bound. Her struggles were in vain, though she was treated with no ungentleness, and some one whispered in her ear:

'Fear nothing, fair maid, no one shall harm you.'

There was a confusion, a swift ride, with the cold night wind blowing in their faces; then some steep ascent, up which the girl was carefully conveyed; and finally, on level ground once more, her eyes were freed from the bandage, and she saw herself in a rock-hewn cavern, lighted and warmed by a vast wood fire near the entrance, furnished with some attempt at comfort, and divided into two chambers by a curtain. High up in the side of the noble mountain which overhangs Bellinzona, half hidden by boughs and trailing streamers of wild plants, this cave may still be seen. Before

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her stood the misshapen figure of Walther von Spitzhof. The splendid features of the girl kindled with scorn.

'So it is you, who have brought me here, in your malice and wounded pride. But an Italian girl is free—even from the tyrannical Swiss—free at least to die!'

She rushed towards the precipitous edge of the cavern, but the Landvögt caught her and held her back.

'Did I not tell you not to fear?' he said sadly and reproachfully; 'and have I ever given you reason to disbelieve me? I have brought you here with no evil intent, but to save you from great harm and sorrow. You will know one day that I speak the truth. My men will guard you safely, and you will be restored to your home as soon as may be. In the meantime, I will never intrude upon you my unwelcome presence,' he added, with an expression of deep melancholy. 'No voice harsher than the night-bird's will sound in your ear; no form more hideous than that of some prowling wolf in yonder copse will offend your sight. Caterina, farewell.'

In a moment he was gone, and Caterina remained in the keeping of a few sturdy men-at-arms, with one woman to serve her and bear her company. Further than that her questions and her entreaties were equally unheeded, no disrespect was shown her. All that was needful for her comfort was freely supplied, and her rough guardians seemed to regard her as a mistress. She wavered between doubt of the Landvögt's good faith and a self-accusing remembrance of his silent kindnesses. The days dragged on heavily. At length a morning came when steps were heard scaling the ascent, and the men-at-arms announced that their master was at hand. He appeared.

'Signorina,' he said, as respectfully as though she were a lady of high birth, and no mere peasant maid, 'the time has come when you may return to your home.'

Speechless, because still in doubt, Caterina was assisted down the steep, and escorted through the beautiful Swiss valley to her own humble cottage in Bellinzona. Her parents embraced her with joy, but with no surprise, and then turned to thank her conductor with expressions of deep gratitude. The story was quickly told. On the very night when Caterina had been (as she thought) so cruelly torn away, her parents had been awakened by loud and angry voices, and rising trembling and in haste, had found their house filled with men in the livery of Schwyz, who violently demanded from the old people where their daughter was to be found. They then perceived that she was missing. The intruders, when convinced that their distress and perplexity were real, left them with muttered oaths, and from that day, the ill favour of Ulrich von Halm rested on the poor old couple, and produced many trials in their small household. But they were comforted by the kind

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words of the Landvögt of Unterwalden, who had told them in secret of the safety of their child, and promised to restore her to them so soon as Landvögt Ulrich should be recalled, which he, Walther von Spitzhof, knew would shortly happen. It had happened; the tyrant was gone, and Caterina was safe.

The Landvögt of Unterwalden had stood by until the confused explanations had been poured forth by the mother and understood by Caterina. Then, turning to her, he said: 'I have but waited to hear from your own lips, Signorina, that you now acquit me of ill intent towards you. Without that, I cannot be content. Afterwards, I will pray you to pardon my seeming discourtesy, and will depart and trouble you no more.'

Caterina looked at him wistfully.

'Signor von Spitzhof,' she said, with a timid, hesitating utterance, 'I am for ever grateful to you. This is the noble kindness which girls so often vainly dream of, and which has no self in it. Is there anything,—*anything*, my lord, by which I can repay you?'

He looked at her quickly. Then, again mournful, he replied,—

'Nothing but what would give you too much pain to grant. Therefore I do not ask repayment.'

He was about to go, with a deep bow, and a look which Caterina remembered of old. She flung herself before him.

'My lord, Walther von Spitzhof,' she cried; 'I know your heart, and how great and true it is. If I were not a poor peasant girl,—if I were a noble lady worthy of you, I would say, Do not go back lonely and sad to that dismal tower on the hill. But I am too low-born.'

Half afraid of her own boldness, the girl drew back, her perfect face crimson with blushes.

'Low-born!' cried Walther; 'and is any Swiss of noble blood? Are we not all one? But you are so beautiful, and I am misshapen, and grave, and dull.'

Caterina gave one glance at his longing eyes.

'My lord,' she whispered, 'if you care for my beauty, take it; it is yours. For I love you.'

The renown of that strangely-matched pair, of his deformity and her unrivalled loveliness, and of the happiness and goodness which surrounded them in that castle on the hill above Bellinzona, has lived to the present day. The peasants still remember 'La Signora Caterina, la bella, la buona, *la nostra*.'

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Falls of the Madésimo.

A short distance above Campo Dolcino, on the Splügen route, the *Madésimo* torrent joins the Lira. It precipitates itself some 700 feet, forming a beautiful waterfall. After passing this fine object the road winds onward and upward by numerous zig-zags cut in the face of an almost perpendicular rock. Considerable portions of it are protected from falling avalanches by massive galleries of stone-work. These and the strongly built houses of refuge which are passed at intervals, warn the traveller of the dangers of the route in winter. During snow-storms bells are constantly rung in the highest of these refuges to guide passers-by to a place of safety. After threading a bleak, narrow, desolate valley the summit of the Splügen (6945 feet) is reached, distinguished by a stone and cross, which mark the division between Italy and Switzerland. Here the road begins almost immediately to descend by another series of rapid zig-zags, until, 2000 feet below the summit, it

The Village of Splügen.

passes through the small village of Splügen, which has given its name to the pass.

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Splügen derives its importance solely from its position. Here unite two main lines from Italy, the Bernardino route from the Lago Maggiore and the Splügen route from the lake of Como. The first of these fine roads was constructed (from 1819 to 1823) by the two governments of the Grisons and Sardinia. The second was made by the Austrian government about the same time, when it was seen that the new Bernardino route would divert most of the trade from Austrian Italy. Both of these passes were in all probability known to the Romans; but they were only traversed by bridle-roads until the above-mentioned years. A French army, under Macdonald, crossed the Splügen in December 1800, under almost insurmountable difficulties and with great loss.

A diligence is not, perhaps, the most elegant, or the easiest, or the fastest, of wheeled conveyances, but still it has its merits, and many will regret when it shall be numbered among the things that were. Lumbering, awkward, slow, not over clean, not too roomy, a good deal of enjoyment may be got from it if you will but take the thing as it is, and not expect it to perform the functions of a mail-coach or a park phaeton. Give me a seat next to the driver of a diligence on a picturesque road, and I am perfectly happy. The driver is usually a pleasant fellow, with a fund of anecdote and adventure; and if he be but in the vein many are the wonderful tales he will tell, as his horses drag wearily the heavy machine in diagonal lines across the roadway when going up hill, or as they spin it close to the parapet when turning the sharp *tourniquets* on their downward journey. Here is a tale told me by the driver, Giacomo, a finely-built, olive-coloured, bearded Italian Swiss, on our descent from Splügen through the wild Roffla Schlucht, where the young Rhine tumbles in picturesque cascades below the roadway, and the bright, smiling Schamser Thal, with its six silver streams flowing through pleasing green meadows:—

BERTA'S DREAM.

'The scene was like a page cut out of a fairy tale. A small glade, rich and deep, sheltered by a gently swelling hill, and overhung by foliage, grey, and green, and black—olive, oak, and cedar. The indescribable Italian air made it all dreamy, and soft, and sweet. The shadows lay purple on the golden turf, vines hung blue clusters on the trees, and gay flowers crushed their bright heads together in a wealth and luxury of nature. In the midst of all this beauty a group of *contadini*, in picturesque gala dresses, sat around a rural feast spread upon the grass. One bronzed fellow, showing two rows of whitest teeth, was merrily singing, wine-cup in hand, a ditty whose complimentary nature was obvious by the arch looks with which he addressed it towards a pair of handsome young folk sitting side by side in a prominent position among

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the holiday-makers. All eyes followed those of the singer. Each verse raised fresh applause, and peals of simple, happy laughter, especially when the pretty girl, whom all were regarding, having long sat uneasily smiling, her looks cast down on the silver chain and cross which she was nervously fingering, burst into a mixture of sobs and laughter, and, with a pretty, modest exclamation of "Oh, Giuseppe!" hid her mounting blushes on the shoulder of the proud, glad-looking peasant at her side. At a glance one saw that it was a bridal party.

'But what is that gloomy face, that lurking figure, like a thunder-cloud upon a sunny sky? Between the long black bars of the cedar appear glimpses of a form, radiant in its glow of rich dark southern colouring, the skirt of green "*olivastro*," such as ancient painters loved; a crimson bodice, a golden chain duskily glittering beneath a face full of meaning—too full. It is too good a face for such meaning as that which deforms it now; a face that might be sweet, gentle, loveable, and loving; but now all is one red heat of hate, and jealousy, and mad revenge. It is Berta; she who loved Giuseppe, and whom he once vowed to love for her sparkling eyes and marvellous low voice, which reminded him always of the richest, softest things he knew—cream, and velvet, and down. But he had taken fright—good, easy-natured fellow—at one of her wild bursts of sudden passion, and thenceforth it was the modest, silent Marietta, whom he singled out for a companion on every *festa;* and it was Marietta whose timidity he was now trying to coax away. That gallant, lover-like caress, at which the others laughed, which the singer paused to eulogize, was as "a thousand little shafts of flame" to Berta, who had fled from the feast, and was spying and raging unobserved.

'What was that which her soft brown hand was fingering so restlessly at her belt? Once it flashed an incautious gleam like a sudden lightning among the dark leafage. It startled Berta herself; drawing in her breath once through her clenched teeth with a sharp hissing sound, she put back that treacherous something in its hiding-place, and stole away. She went back through the vineyards, along the dusty road to the village. As she passed the little cottage, dazzling in its fresh white coat, dotted with the floating shadows of the leaves curling about the verandah, she stopped a moment to glance through the open door at the flitting forms of Marietta's play-mates, who were decking her new home with flowers. Their low-voiced, laughing talk came over to the poor girl. Again her fingers sought her belt.

'"I *will* do it!" she muttered, "I will! But I am weak, and human revenge may fail. Oh, Madonna! help me to punish them as it is my right to do."

'She went on her way, still muttering beneath her breath such hot, perpetual prayers as, she thought, must surely pierce that hopeless sky above, which seemed to have "never a chink" in its cruel serenity of blue, and bring down the curse she sought.

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'It was night. The air was dense, and still, and awful. Thunder growled angrily. The yellow lightning gleamed out from time to time. Was it a human countenance? was it Berta's, which looked so livid and so fierce beside the white wall of that peaceful cottage? Peaceful? no! What cry of anguish and despair comes from it? What hurried movements are going on within? Berta lingers but a moment, and then is lost as suddenly as a lizard darting into the shadow of the orange-groves.

'She reappears presently in another instantaneous gleam. She is far off already; her pace is swift. It must needs be, she has far to go. Her home is in Fobello; it is there that her ill deed was done, and she must reach Varallo as soon as may be. She is a pilgrim. At Varallo is the *Sacro Monte*—the marvellous hill, with its fifty chapels, where prayers ascend more readily than in one's own quiet hut, or in the little church where the old *padre* mutters the mass that we do not well comprehend, beyond the fact that the hearing of it will do good to our souls. Were a suppliant to climb the steps of that sacred mount on bended knees; to offer up vows rich with the heart's hottest fire; to promise such small tribute as a village maid can pay; surely, surely, the answer would come, and quickly. Besides, it is but one poor prayer that Berta has to offer. Her stroke has not killed the poor little bride. She knew it would not; she knew she was too weak, too unskilful in such work, to strike home, and complete her own scheme of vengeance. She had done her part as best she might, and the Saints must help her now. She would assail them all. St. Anna, St. Peter, St. Francesco, were listening on that hill, besides the Holy Mother herself. Her throat is parched; her feet are sore; but she does not feel the want of rest or food. Nor can she heed the pure, benevolent dawn springing up from behind those white peaks which no speck or stain can sully. On and on, through day and night, fatigue and fasting, Berta hurries, impetuous and stern. Her head is throbbing; her hands are hot and dry; a strange choked feeling is in her throat; sudden pains dart through her body. No matter: there will be time to rest hereafter, when her prayers are answered.

'She sees Varallo; it is when the sun is setting; the tall, narrow bridge, the dry grey stones in the river's bed, the old houses, with dark beams and quaint carvings overhanging the path beside the stream. But she overlooks all these, strange though they are to her. She has no curiosity for new things; she sees the Sacred Mount, and that usurps all thoughts, all hopes, all desire.

'But what is this? At the first sight of that longed-for spot a sharp, shooting pang, a long thread of fire, seems drawn through all her frame. As she watches it, devouring it with her gaze, the outlines of the hill seem to waver, to change, to advance, and then recede, in a strange, weird manner. There is a roar and rush of waters in her ears, but the river is almost dry.

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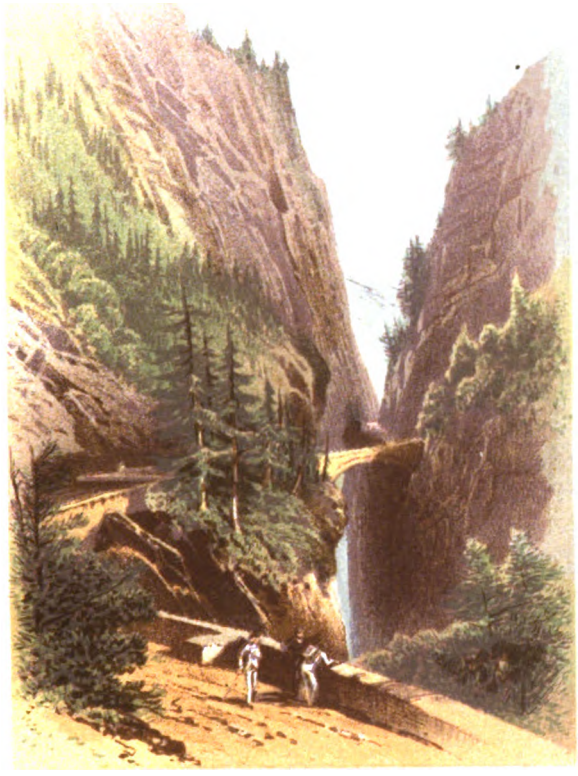

Via Mala.

'She knows no more until she suddenly finds herself on a bed in a humble but cleanly room, a cool bandage on her forehead, a smell of burning vinegar all about, a kind old woman's face looking down anxiously upon her. She tries to speak and rise, but the old woman lays her hand upon her; and she finds, too, that she is very weak.'

Here Giacomo paused, and stopped his horses to let us walk through the *Via Mala*, which we were just entering: 'I know,' he said, 'that Messieurs les Anglais are fond of walking, and do not like to be troubled with talking when gazing on such superb scenery as this.'

The Via Mala is one of the most extraordinary defiles in the Alps. From the northern end of the Schamser Thal (*Vallis Sexamniensis*, It. *Sesáme*) it extends four miles down the valley to within a short distance of the village of *Thusis*. The walls of this gigantic cleft are nowhere less than 1500 feet in height, and in places they overhang the valley to such an extent as to approach within 30 feet of each other. The broad roadway is carried with marvellous ingenuity and skill, now on the face of one cliff, now spanning the ravine in a bold bridge, now on the face of the opposite wall of rock. In one

Coire.

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part it pierces the rock for 220 feet (*Verlorne Loch*), in others the rocks are hollowed out so as to overhang the road as with a canopy. Far below the path the impetuous torrent rushes along,—

'Recoiling, turmoiling, and toiling, and boiling;
And gleaming, and streaming, and steaming, and beaming;
And rushing, and flushing, and brushing, and gushing;
And flapping, and rapping, and clapping, and slapping;
And curling, and whirling, and purling, and twirling;
And thumping, and plumping, and bumping, and jumping;
And dashing, and flashing, and splashing, and clashing;
And so never ending, but always descending,
Sounds and motions for ever and ever are blending,
All at once and all o'er, with a mighty uproar.'

Southey.

After passing through the Via Mala both Giacomo and I were silent for a time. The remembrance of the awful gorge which we had just quitted did not incline me to speak, and my companion, with true instinctive courtesy, refrained from breaking in upon my voluntary silence. When at length I asked him to resume his pathetic tale, he at once continued :—

'"Poverina, Carina!" With such sweet, petting words, her friendly nurse urges her to be patient and she will soon be well. A fussy Italian doctor here hurries in, feels her pulse, shakes his head, gives his draught and "Addio!" Berta must sleep; and she does sleep, for to her misery she finds that now, at the very moment of reaching what she has come so far to find, she is bound hand and foot by invisible but invincible bonds; Marietta's wound may be healing, and she cannot implore the Saints for revenge.

'Sick and weak, sleeping frequently in a stupor, with paroxysms of rage and impotent desire between, Berta lay under that good Samaritan's roof for many days. Sometimes the Padre came; not old and incomprehensible, like him of Fobello, but earnest, with sweet yet searching words, such as the poor girl had never heard before. They brought wild doubts into her mind; was not revenge just and right, then, after all? Would not the Saints help her for all her prayers and her offered savings? Was there some higher law which she had never dreamed of? She tried to shut her thoughts against such questionings, but in vain.

'At last, one night when her good old friend, intending to watch by the sick girl, was really nid-nid-nodding before the lamp, with its long untrimmed wick—when the humming of the great moths, or the occasional wail of a night-bird, was the only sound, and the cool air came in freshly through the open window, it seemed to Berta that strength returned to her on a sudden; that she

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was conscious of a lighter, more active sensation than she had ever felt before. Overjoyed at the boon, she sprang from bed, and dressing with the utmost haste, but very quietly, stole from the house, and up towards the Hill. All was dark at first. She stumbled on many a stock or stone, but, strangely enough, as she proceeded she saw lights upon the slope shining with the green jewel-like lustre of a glowworm. Approaching, she saw that some of the many chapels there were illuminated. At the foot of the ascent she fell on her knees, and began the first of her long succession of prayers. Before she rose again, she heard a voice, sweet as a nightingale's, failing like a breeze, "Daughter, mount up; the grace of Heaven is on you."

'Up, up, through the pure night air, still strong, and buoyant, and hopeful, with only the lulling sounds of nature, like snatches of faint hymns, around her, the girl mounted; and now, led by the mystic light, she reached the first chapel, known as that of the Fall of Man. Looking through the glazed loop-hole in the wall which should show her the group of moulded images of sacred meaning to aid her devotion, she saw—what? No Adam and Eve; no shapes of the animals which dwelt in Eden; but only one dark face, fierce, cruel, hard—a woman's, yet most unwomanly—her own. The sight struck a sort of horror into her heart; the night became darker and fearful on a sudden; she went on tottering and trembling, as one might do who had seen an evil spirit. The words of cursing in the form of prayer died silent on her lips.

'Another light summoned her. Again she looked into another of the many oratories or sacred peep-shows which deck this singular mount. "The Annunciation"—such was the title of the station; but again she saw one face alone; hers no longer, but one sweet, and pure, and fair—strong yet gentle, calm and smiling—Mary the Blessed; that young maiden, the jewel of whose soul lay yet unshaped by anguish. In the background Berta saw again looming forth the shadow of her own evil face. The thing had become a nightmare to her. She turned away with a horrible oppression. Yet had she come so far to fail at last? She knelt to force the wicked petition from her lips, "Let Marietta die." But, as she did so, that vile face seemed to glare and grin mockingly on her. She could not speak for an ague of dread which seized her. The holy maiden seemed to smile as friend to friend and say, "Take the gift of purity."

'She pursued her way, but slowly now and with difficulty, past many chapels which had no light—they held no message for her. At last the peaceful glow across her path told her to look again. *A Pietà*, the saddest group the mind can picture; the Son lies dead, and the blessed women are weeping round. Berta wept too. Suddenly she who wore among them "sorrow's crown of sorrow," raised her sweet grave eyes, red with weeping, yet with the light of a solemn peace in their loving depths. They met poor Berta's bewildered gaze. The voice breathed in her ear again, "My daughter, I too have suffered. Accept the gift of suffering." Here, also, her prayers were dumb.

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'The girl climbed wearily to the last station of all, the Sepulchre of the Virgin. In this spot, all sorrow past, all peace and rest attained, lay she who bare more than ever woman bare. There was no word for Berta here; only silence, and an awe that could be felt. Her feet would bear her no farther; her lips could frame no sound. She sank upon the turf, and remained there with a dumb, dead numbness in her soul.

'Suddenly a little bird lifted up its voice above her head, and sang its midnight hymn. It felt like cool water to Berta's fevered frame; like a stroke to cut away strong bands that had held her spirit. Her lips spoke, she knew not how, "Lord, forgive me; let Marietta live!"

'A light shone around her; some mystic vision of delight was about to reveal itself; dimly the peaceful Face began to shape itself in the brightness: Berta darted forward in her joy—and woke.

'But it had not been all a dream.'

The remainder of the Splügen route from the Via Mala, through the villages of *Thusis Katzis, Rhäziins,* and *Bonaduz,* to *Reichenau,* abounds in beauties and picturesque views. The lower part of the valley, known as the *Domleschger Thal* (Rom., *Domgiasca,* i.e., *Vallis domestica*), is remarkable for the large number of old castles which crown many of the eminences on either bank of the Hinter-Rhein, and also for the rich cultivation of the lower slopes of the mountains.

Reichenau, which stands near the junction of the Hinter-Rhein with the Vorder-Rhein, is a small town which has been made famous by the fact that it was here that Louis Philippe, afterwards King of the French, acted as teacher of mathematics in a school during the years 1793–94.

On leaving Reichenau the road turns eastward, and after crossing the Hinter-Rhein by a long and dark covered bridge, continues on the right bank of the river, through a country devoid of interest, to the quaint old town of *Coire.*

Coire (Ger., *Chur,* It., *Coira,* Romansch, *Quoira* or *Cuera*) is the capital of the Canton of the Grisons, and occupies the site of the Roman station, *Curia Rhætorum.* Though small it is a place of considerable trade, as it stands at the junction of many important roads leading over the Alps. A couple of hours will be well spent in strolling about the town, and in visiting the Cathedral or the Bishop's Palace; while, if a longer stay be made here, there are fine views from many of the neighbouring heights.

The Cathedral of St. Lucius is built in great measure in the Lombard style, and portions of it are said to date from the seventh century. The columns of the western porch, resting on the backs of lions, deserve special attention. They are thoroughly Lombardic. In the interior the great height of the pavement of the choir above that of the nave, and the rich gilt sculptured altar-piece will at once attract attention.

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CHUR TO ZÜRICH.

The whole of this journey may now be performed by rail. The railway runs for the most part through an interesting and picturesque country; in particular, magnificent views are seen of the Lake of Wallenstadt, as the road creeps along the face of the cliffs which skirt this beautiful sheet of water on the south, and as the traveller issues from the tunnels which burrow many of the projecting rocks.

Pfäffers.

At least one halt should be made on this journey, at Ragatz, for the purpose of seeing the Baths of Pfäffers, one of the most extraordinary sights in Switzerland.

Ragatz is situated on the

The Lake of Wallenstadt

Rhine at the point where it is joined by the impetuous mountain torrent, the Tamina, which descends from the great Dödi range, the northern boundary

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of the valley of the Upper Rhine. The town itself is insignificant, and owes its importance simply as being a convenient resting-place for visitors who frequent the hot baths of Pfäffers. Indeed, though the actual hot springs are a good hour's walk from the town, a Pfäffers bath may be enjoyed in Ragatz itself, for the water is conveyed by wooden pipes down the valley to the principal hotels. The situation of Ragatz is picturesque, as the valley of the Rhine is here enclosed by many fine mountains, and it consequently forms good head-quarters for those who wish to make mountain excursions in the neighbourhood. In particular, it is a capital starting-point for the exploration of the Prättigäu, a district little known, but abounding in fine scenery.

The Prättigäu, *i.e.* the Meadow-valley (*val pratens*), is a rather narrow valley descending westward to the Rhine near Ragatz, drained by the *Landquart*. A high lateral Alpine chain, the *Rœticon*, bounds it on the north, separating it from the Austrian district, the Vorarlberg. Towards the east it communicates with the *Engadine*, or valley of the Inn; and southward and westward with the valley of the Upper Rhine. A pleasant circular route of a few days might therefore be made from Ragatz (or Coire), which would lead round to Thusis, and so through Reichenau to either starting-point. This would pass through some of the very finest scenery in Switzerland. But the easiest, and at the same time the most remarkable excursion from Ragatz, is that leading up the valley of the Tamina to the baths of Pfäffers, about two miles and a half above the town. 'From its opening, close to Ragatz, the valley of the Tamina is a mere ravine, with high and steep mountains rising on either hand, and the walk or drive to the baths by the road along the left bank, is in itself sufficiently interesting. The establishment, a large monastic-looking building, capable of accommodating 140 patients, lies in the depth of a ravine between walls of dripping rock. Immediately above the large stone hall where patients drink the waters, the nummulitic limestone rocks on either side of the Tamina rise in vertical walls, leaving a mere strip of sky overhead. A pathway is partly cut in the rock, partly carried along planks supported on iron holdfasts, 30 to 40 feet above the torrent. After passing a doorway, the cleft becomes still narrower, the rocks close overhead, and only here and there some gleams of daylight reach the bottom of the abyss. Amidst the gloom, which is nearly pitch darkness, except in the middle of the day, the traveller advances along the frail pathway. About a quarter of a mile from the baths the actual sources are reached. The water issues from several clefts in the rock at a temperature of about 100° Fahr., and is received in a reservoir, whence to be led in pipes to the neighbouring baths, and in part to Ragatz. The effect of returning to daylight from this extraordinary chasm, is scarcely less striking than the entrance to it, and the excursion should on no account be omitted by travellers visiting this part of Switzerland.

'In returning to Ragatz, most pedestrians make a circuit by the village

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and convent of Pfäffers. These lie on the east side of the Tamina, about 600 feet above the baths, or 2800 feet above the sea. The rocks on the side of the gorge opposite to the baths being quite inaccessible, the ascent is by a steep path above the left bank. After awhile the path descends to the left, and crosses the torrent (here invisible) immediately over the pathway which had been traversed in visiting the hot springs. A passenger not aware of the fact would not suppose that from 100 to 200 feet below him a considerable stream rushes down through its concealed chasms. In some states of the weather the vapour from the hot springs is seen rising through the very narrow cleft which must once have given passage to the Tamina.'*

The most noticeable object in the village itself is the old Benedictine Abbey, formerly one of the most powerful of the monastic establishments in Switzerland. It was founded in 713, and suppressed in 1838, by the Cantonal Government of St. Gall, in consequence of grave internal dissensions. The existing buildings date from 1665, and are now used as a lunatic asylum.

Soon after passing Sargans, the railway skirts the Lake of Wallenstadt (Ger. *Wallen See*), a small sheet of water, but so shut in with high rocky precipices that it is scarcely inferior in grandeur to the Lake of Lucerne; still it lacks the variety which the latter derives from its sinuous shore and varying breadth.

From Wesen at the western end of the lake, the railroad runs parallel to the celebrated Linth Canal which joins the Lakes of Wallenstadt and Zürich. This great work was executed by Conrad Escher, by order of the Swiss Diet, from 1807 to 1822. The river Linth, from which the canal derives its name, descends into the Lake of Wallenstadt from the Alps of Glarus. Such was the amount of detritus brought down by it, that the stream was constantly changing its direction and flooding the lands near its mouth; and the accumulation of *débris* prevented the proper exit of the waters of the Lake of Wallenstadt by the river Maag. Escher successfully converted the Maag and the lower portion of the Linth into canals, and thus saved the adjacent country from complete ruin. The Federal Government, in recognition of his services, conferred on him and his descendants the honorary addition of 'Von der Linth' to his original surname.

Instead of proceeding the whole of the way to Zürich by rail, it would be well to descend at *Rapperschwyl*, and make the rest of the journey down the lake. At this point the long Lake of Zürich is greatly narrowed, and the opposite banks are joined by a wooden bridge, or causeway, nearly a mile in length. This strange structure, which was originally built in 1350, and re-constructed in 1819, is supported on 180 piers composed of three slender oak beams. It has no parapet, and the pathway is but 12 feet wide. A

* Ball. 'The Central Alps.'

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portion of the bridge can be removed to let through the steam-boats which ply from Zürich to the extreme east of the lake at Schmerikon.

The Lake of Zürich, though it cannot compete with the stern grandeur found on the lakes of Lucerne, Wallenstadt, Brienz, and Thun, nor yet with the magnificence of scenery which the Lake of Geneva displays, has, nevertheless, a beauty of its own. Its great length as compared with its breadth (26 miles by 3), gives to it somewhat the appearance of a broad river. The shores rise from the water with a gentle slope. Nearer the edge of the lake are green meadows and corn-lands; to these succeed rich vineyards and fruit-gardens; while the tops of the hills are covered with timber. Everything is rich, smiling, and prosperous; and the houses and villas with which both shores are plentifully sprinkled, add a human interest to the scene, and render it eminently cheering. The snow-clad Alps make a stern and grand background to this loveliness.

There are many charming resting-places on the shores of the lake. From *Richterswyl* an excursion may easily be made to the *Abbey of Einsiedeln*, and to the battle-field of *Morgarten*.

Einsiedeln (*Monasterium Eremitarum*) is the most noted abbey in Switzerland, and is said to attract more pilgrims than any other shrine, saving the Holy House of Loretto, Santiago de Compostella, and Mariazell in Styria. Its importance is due to a reputed miraculous image of the Virgin Mary, given by Hildegarde, Abbess of the Convent of Our Lady at Zürich, to Meinrad, Count of Sulgen. The reputation of St. Meinrad increased rapidly after his death, and a Benedictine Abbey was founded on the site of his cell. The sacred image was carried off by the French in 1798; but the monks represented subsequently that it had been recovered by them, and since that time pilgrimages to the shrine have been resumed, and the pilgrims now average 150,000 each year. The abbey is an extensive building in the Italian style, rebuilt in the early part of the eighteenth century.

The battle-field of Morgarten is situated a few miles south-west of Einsiedeln, on the shores of the Lake of Egeri. Here the Austrians under Leopold of Austria, were totally defeated by the Swiss, Nov. 16, 1315. At the southern end of the lake stands a small chapel, the walls of which are covered with a picture representing the battle. Mass is said here annually on the anniversary.

Horgen, on the Lake of Zürich, is a convenient point for visiting the charming little Lake of Zug. If the ascent of the Rigi has not yet been made, the traveller will do well to continue his journey down this lake to Arth; or if he has followed the previous route to Morgarten, he may continue his course along the northern edge of the Lake of Egeri to the town of Zug, or turn southward from Morgarten to Schwyz, and so reach Arth through *Lowerz* and *Goldau*.

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The town of *Zürich* stands at the western extremity of the lake to which it gives its name, where its waters are discharged by the green and rapid stream, the *Limmat*. Its situation is singularly beautiful; a rich cultivated landscape spreading before it on both sides of the lake. It stands at the head of the Swiss manufacturing towns; and is also the literary capital of Switzerland. The sights of the place will detain the visitor for some considerable time. Among them may be enumerated:—

Zurich.

The *Cathedral* (*Gross-Münster*), a grand and simple Romanesque building.

The Falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen.

The *Town Library*, in which are preserved some interesting autographs;

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large relief maps of portions of Switzerland; and an extensive collection of remains from the lake dwellings.

The Augustine Church, St. Peter's Church, and the Frau-Münster Church, distinguished by its tall red spire, all deserve visits.

In a building formerly used as an arsenal, near St. Peter's Church, is a fine collection of armour.

No one should omit to ascend the *Uetliberg*, the most northerly point of the Albis range, situated about five miles west of Zürich. The view from its summit when compared with other Alpine panoramas is deficient in grandeur, it is true, but like the lake which it overlooks, it has a quiet beauty of its own. It extends over a very large area, and includes the Bernese Alps, the Black Forest, the Jura Chain, and the Vosges.

ZÜRICH TO SCHAFFHAUSEN.

This journey may also be performed entirely by rail. It lies through a sufficiently picturesque country, though there is nothing very marked to attract attention. Immediately before entering the town the railway pierces the rock on which *Schloss Laufen* stands, and just before entering this tunnel the eye catches a glimpse of the glorious Falls of Schaffhausen. On emerging from the tunnel the railway crosses the Rhine, immediately above the falls, by a long stone bridge.

Schaffhausen is a quaintly-built old town, and retains many mediæval domestic buildings. Its appearance will bring to mind Basle, or other German towns which, like it, once had the rank of free imperial cities.* A stroll through the town and a visit to the *Cathedral*, the castle of *Munoth*, and to the promenade of *Fäsistaub*, which overlooks the rapids of the Rhine, will well repay the time spent upon them; but in all probability the traveller will hurry on to the great sight of the neighbourhood, the *Falls of the Rhine* (Ger. *Rheinfall*), which are situated about two miles below the town. Here the whole river is precipitated down a ridge of rock about 60 feet in depth, and though this is no very great depth, yet the volume of water and the rapidity of the current make the falls one of the grandest scenes in Europe.

'Stand for half-an-hour beside the Fall of Schaffhausen, on the north side where the rapids are long, and watch how the vaults of water first bend,

* Schaffhausen became an *ally* of several of the Swiss cantons in 1454; a *member* of the Swiss Confederacy in 1501.

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unbroken, in pure polished velocity, over the arching rocks at the brow of the cataract, covering them with a dome of crystal 20 feet thick, so swift that its motion is unseen except when a foam globe from above darts over it like a falling star; and how the trees are lighted above it under all their leaves, at the instant that it breaks into foam; and how all the hollows of that foam burn with green fire like so much shattering chrysoprase; and how, ever and anon, startling you with its white flash, a jet of spray leaps hissing out of the fall like a rocket, bursting in the wind and driven away in dust, filling the air with light; and how through the curdling wreaths of the restless, crashing abyss below, the blue of the water, paled by the foam in its body, shows purer than the sky through white rain-cloud; while the shuddering iris stoops in tremulous stillness over all, fading and flushing alternately through the choking spray and shattered sunshine, hiding itself at last among the thick golden leaves which toss to and fro in sympathy with the wild water; their dripping masses lifted at intervals, like sheaves of loaded corn, by some stronger gush from the cataract, and bowed again upon the mossy rocks as its roar dies away; the dew gushing from their thick branches through drooping clusters of emerald herbage, and sparkling in white threads along the dark rocks of the shore, feeding the lichens which chase and chequer them with purple and silver.'*

From Schaffhausen the traveller may proceed direct to Basle by rail, but unless time presses he should not throw away the opportunity of passing through the Black Forest on his way home. The road from Schaffhausen to Freiburg is most picturesque, and few scenes exceed in stern grandeur the narrow defile through the Black Forest known as the Höllenthal.

* Ruskin, 'Modern Painters,' Vol. i. p. 344.

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ROUTE INTO SWITZERLAND BY WAY OF DIJON AND NEUCHATEL.

AN agreeable route into Switzerland lies by way of Dijon and Neuchâtel to Berne and the Bernese Oberland. This not only brings the traveller at once into the heart of the country, but affords an opportunity of seeing the pleasant but quiet scenery of the Jura and the adjacent country before the eye is accustomed to the sterner beauties of the Alps.

Dijon, the former capital of Burgundy, forms a convenient resting-place on the road from Paris to Neuchâtel. There are few French provincial towns which surpass it in beauty of situation: and as it still retains its old walls and gates, and many fine churches, and interesting specimens of street architecture, it is a charming place for a day's rest. The Church of Nôtre Dame in particular deserves especial attention. 'We found that this city, once the capital of Burgundy, of oval shape, bristled on the side of a gentle hill, descending to a little river, and was surrounded on all sides by ramparts, along which a walk, shaded by trees, continuously ran; a pleasant shade, and thus encircling the town, accessible in a few minutes from every part, and forming a pretty object when seen at the end of any of its narrow streets. We found three fine churches still in perfect repair, and, besides these, the skeletons of sacred buildings almost as noble, which, I will hope, dismantled by violence at the Revolution, and not perishing by mere heartless neglect, were now debased to secular and ignoble uses. These fine old buildings—churches no doubt—were occupied, one as a great coach-house for worn-out diligences; one as a stable; and one as a market for poultry and fruit; the first, battered, dirty, and dilapidated, terminating in a series of arches springing from the ground, and *arbouring* above, which reminded us of the glorious church of St. Ouen at Rouen, and all still sustaining holy vestiges of imagery once consecrated, now left to crumble unheeded, without one aged devotee to deplore the sacrilege!'*

A good deal of the scenery on either side of the railroad from Dijon to Neuchâtel is extremely pretty, becoming positively fine when the slopes of the Jura are being ascended. The grandeur of true Swiss scenery, however, must not be expected.

Neuchâtel (Ger. *Neuenburg*) is pleasantly situated on the western shore of the large Lake of Neuchâtel, and is the chief town of the canton and quondam principality of the same name. Charming walks on the lower vine-clad slopes of the Jura lie within a short distance of the town: while

* Talfourd's Vacation Rambles.

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longer excursions may be easily made to the Chaumont (3800 feet), and to the Chasseral (5280 feet). From each of these peaks the spectator looks over a most extensive and picturesque panorama, stretching far over the pleasant and fruitful hill-country, which lies east and south-east of the Lake of Neuchâtel. In clear weather the complete chain of the Bernese Alps, and even Mont Blanc, may be distinctly seen from the Chasseral.

Nôtre Dame, Dijon.

A pleasant day may also be spent by taking the rail to *Chaux-de-Fonds* and *Le Locle*, and returning by road to Neuchâtel. The above-named places lie in the very heart of the Jura, and are the chief seats of the Swiss watch manufacture; but besides, the road going and coming, and the immediate neighbourhood of these towns, abound in fine scenery. At *Les Hauts Geneveys*, in particular, a splendid view of Mont Blanc and the Bernese Alps is obtained,

Street at Berne.

while Le Locle may be made the starting-point for several pleasant and easily-

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reached sights, as the *Roche-fendue*, a deep cutting through the vast mass of rock which lies along the French frontier, and the *Saut du Doubs*, a fine waterfall, also upon the border of France.

The Lake of Neuchâtel is a beautiful emerald-green sheet of water, about 24 miles long and 6 broad. Its eastern shores are flat; but on the west its waters wash the base of the Jura, and though its character is by no means Alpine, it always forms a pleasing object from the town of Neuchâtel and its neighbourhood. It is drained by the Zihl (*Thièle*), first into the Lake of Bienne (Ger. *Bieler See*), and then into the Aar, while on its eastern shore it receives the waters of the small Lake of Morat (*Murtener See*) by the little River Broye. A steamboat traverses daily both these lakes and their connecting channel; and thus a ready means is afforded of visiting the famous battle-fields of Morat and Grandson, two of the great battles of Swiss independence. This region is thus intimately connected with Dijon and its neighbourhood, which the tourist has just left behind.

Charles the Bold (or the Rash—*le Hardi, le Temeraire*), Duke of Burgundy, 'the most imprudent prince of his time,' as he is justly called by Sir Walter Scott, rejecting the advice of his best friends, was led to make war on the Swiss towns of Berne and Freiburg, because they had assisted his enemies, and had taken possession of a portion of his territory. Accordingly, after having taken three or four small places held by the Swiss, Charles laid siege to Grandson, and, having taken it, rashly advanced into the mountains to meet an army which was reported as coming to the assistance of the Swiss. What followed must be told in the quaint, unimpassioned language of Philippe de Comines, the sagacious chronicler of the doings of the astute but perfidious Louis XI., and his valiant and impetuous adversary Charles of Burgundy. 'Il avoit envoyé cent Archers garder certain pas à l'encontre de cette montagne, et luy se mit en chemin, et rencontrerent ces Suisses la plupart de son armée, estant encores en la plaine. Les premiers rangs de ses gens cuidoient retourner, pour se reioindre avec les autres, mais les menuës gens qui estoient derriere, cuidans que ceux là fuissent, se mirent à la fuïte; et peu à peu se commença à retirer cette armée vers le camp, faisans aucuns tres-bien leur devoir. Fin de compte, quand ils vindrent iusques à leur ost, ils ne s'oserent deffendre: et tout se mit à la fuïte; et gagnerent les Alemans son camp et son artillerie, et toutes les tentes et pavillons de luy et de ses gens (dont il y avoit grand nombre) et d'autres biens infinis: car rien ne se sauva que les personnes: et furent perduës toutes les grandes bagues du dit Duc: mais de gens, pour cette fois, ne perdit que sept Hommes-d'armes. Tout le demeurant fuit, et luy aussi. Il se devoit mieux dire de luy, *qu'il perdit honneur et chevance ce iour*, que l'on ne fit du Roy Jehan de France, qui vaillamment fut pris à la bataille de Poictiers. Voicy la premiere male

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fortune, que ce Duc eut iamais eu en toute sa vie: De toutes ses autres entreprises il en avoit eu l'honneur ou le profit. Quel dommage luy advint ce jour, pour user de sa teste, et mépriser conseil! Quel dommage en receut sa maison, et en quel estat en est elle encores, et en adventure d'estre d'icy à long temps! Quantes sortes de gens luy en devindrent ennemis, et se declarerent, qui le iour de devant temporisoient avec luy, et se feignoient amis! Et pour quelle querelle commença cette guerre? ce fut pour un chariot de peaux de mouton, que monseigneur de Romont prit à un Suisse, en passant par sa terre.'*

The battle of Grandson was fought April 5, 1476, and on the 20th of the following June came the still more crushing defeat at *Morat*, in which Charles was totally defeated by the Swiss Confederates, with a loss of 15,000 men. The Duke fled at once to Burgundy, 'bien desolé, comme raison estoit;' and here he remained for some time, 'comme solitaire, et sembloit plus qu'il faisoit par obstination ce qu'il faisoit, qu'autrement, comme vous entendrez; car la douleur qu'il eut de la perte de la premiere bataille de Granson, fut si grande, et lui troubla tant les esprits, qu'il en tomba en grande maladie.' The end of this turbulent prince was not far distant; at the siege of Nancy, Jan. 6, 1477, he was killed.

NEUCHATEL TO BERNE.

This journey may be made by rail through Bienne; but the most direct and pleasant route is by steamboat from Neuchâtel to Morat, and thence by diligence or carriage to Berne.

Berne, the chief town in the canton of the same name, and the federal capital of Switzerland, is built upon a rocky bluff, surrounded on three sides by the river Aar. It is still a good specimen of an old Swiss town, as it has retained many ancient features. Thus most of the houses in the principal streets are built upon arcades, the quaint appearance of which will remind the visitor of the 'Rows' at Chester: streams of pure water run through all the streets, while street fountains, many of them of considerable beauty, abound. The chief sights in the town are—

The Clock-tower (*Zeitglockenthurm*) contains one of those curious pieces of mechanism of which the clock in the south transept of Strasburg Cathedral may be taken as the type. In the Berne clock are a considerable number of puppets who, for several minutes before and after the striking of each hour, go through a series of droll performances. A cock claps his wings and crows; a troop of bears march past a seated figure, who turns an hour-glass, and

* Memoires, V.

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counts the hour by raising his staff and gaping. Though now nearly in the centre of the city, this tower was, when built, in the twelfth century, on the western border of it, as may be seen from the Latin inscription which it now bears.

The Cathedral (*Münster*) is a fine building of rather late pointed work. Its organ, which is said to rival that at Freiburg and to surpass the well-known one at Haarlem, may be heard almost every evening for a small fee. From the *Platform*, or Cathedral Terrace, formerly the churchyard of the Cathedral, a splendid view of the whole chain of the Bernese Alps is seen. At sunset, when the white heads of these majestic giants are tinged with a delicate rose hue, the sight is sublime.

In addition, the Museum, University, Town Hall, Federal Council Hall, and Picture Gallery, are not without considerable attractions for those who are fond of seeing such sights abroad, or who have neglected their opportunities at home. But no one will omit to visit the *Bears*, who may be seen at any time in the *Bären-graben*. The bear is the cognisance of the canton and town of Berne, which is said to derive its name from the number of bears (*Bären*) formerly found in the woods now occupied by it; or because the reputed founder of the city, Berthold of Zähringen, killed with his own hands a bear of enormous size on the very spot where he wished to lay the foundation. Be this as it may, the bears are regarded with an almost superstitious reverence by the Bernese, and are supported at the public expense.

The city of Berne received a charter from the Emperor Frederick II. in 1218, by which it became a Free Imperial City. It was governed by its own magistrates, and rapidly rose to so great an importance and power, that many of the neighbouring feudal nobles voluntarily became burghers; while others who ventured to oppose the power of this small commonwealth, were deprived of their estates, which became the possessions of the city. Thus grew up the state or canton of Berne. The Bernese successfully resisted Rudolph of Hapsburg and his son Albert; and when, in 1339, the Bavarian Emperor Louis marched against them, it was only to meet with a complete defeat at Laupen. By this victory the power of Berne was finally established, and in 1352 the state was admitted into the Swiss Confederation. Berne subsequently added to its territories the Aargau and the Pays de Vaud, besides many scattered bailiwicks, which it held either independently or in common with other cantons. At the French Revolution Berne was deprived of Aargau and the Pays de Vaud, which were erected into independent cantons in 1803; but in 1815 the former Bishopric of Basle (lying principally in the Jura) was given to it in compensation. It therefore still continues to be by far the largest canton of the Confederation.

In 1848 Berne was chosen as the Federal capital of Switzerland. Previously the governing body sat at Berne, Zürich, and Lucerne alternately.

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THE LAKES OF THUN AND BRIENZ, AND THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD.

On the road from Berne to Thun many fine views of the Bernese Alps are continually coming before the traveller, and as the railway carriages in this part of Switzerland are all built on the American plan, with a passage through them, his position may be altered with almost every change of view.

Thun.

Thun is delightfully situated on the Aar, a very short distance from the exit of this river from the Lake of Thun. It lies on the outskirts of the Oberland District, the giant peaks of that region being seen in the distance, overtopping the mountains which lie in the foreground, and which themselves rise to a considerable height above the

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sea, and attract attention from the beauty of their outline and the thick masses of forest trees with which they are clothed. Thun is accordingly, in summer, made the head-quarters of an immense number of tourists, as many delightful excursions may be easily made from it.

The town itself is quaintly built, and will, like Berne, remind the visitor of Chester. On a prominent elevation over the town is seen the square tower of the old castle of Zähringen, long ago the habitation of the lords of this district. From this point, as also from the old churchyard, and the grounds of the Bellevue Hotel, the town and immediate neighbourhood lies displayed at the feet of the spectator. If more extended panoramas are desired they may be had from almost any of the heights which surround the town.

What the Rigi or Pilatus are to Lucerne or the Faulhorn to the Lake of Brienz and the eastern part of the Bernese Alps, is the Niesen to Thun and its neighbourhood. This mountain is a bold peak lying due south of Thun, and is the northern extremity of a long spur thrown out from the Bernese Alps near the Wildstrubel. It will be readily seen from its position that the panorama from its summit must be varied and extensive. The eye stretches over the whole of the Lake of Thun and a portion of the twin-lake of Brienz, far away over the hilly country through which the Aar flows, up to the Jura chain. On the south the whole range of the Bernese Alps have their bold white peaks distinctly shown against the sky, the Blümlis Alp forming the centre of the line; while the foreground is occupied by the smiling valleys of the Simmen and its tributary streams. There is no difficulty in finding the road to the summit after the little village of Wimmis, eight miles from Thun, is reached: but the mountain will take nearly five hours to ascend from this village; and as the finest panoramic view is obtained an hour or two before sunset, the best plan is to spend the night at the inn which has been built near the summit. In descending the next morning, a variation in the return journey may be made by following the south-eastern slope to the village of Frutigen.

Thun may be made the starting-point from which to visit a charming but comparatively little frequented part of Switzerland, the district namely lying south and south-west of Thun, drained by the Simmen and its tributaries. Usually the traveller hurries on up the valley of the Kander in order to cross the Gemmi as speedily as possible, and so the delightful Unter-Simmen Thal, Ober-Simmen Thal, and Engstligen Thal, are entirely missed. A good carriage-road runs from Thun to Vevay on the Lake of Geneva, following upwards the course of the Simmen, and then descending the valley of the Saane; but a considerable bend is obliged to be made to the northward in order to skirt a spur from the Bernese Alps.

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A fairly good pedestrian might, by using a carriage or diligence for a portion of the journey, make a delightful circular tour from Thun, reaching almost or quite, as circumstances permitted, to the valley of the Rhone and the Lake of Geneva.

Frutigen should first be reached by carriage, and then the Engstligen Thal ascended as far as Adelboden. A decent village inn will be found here, and the tourist may proceed next day across the Hahnenmoos, a low pass over the spur of which the Niesen forms the northern extremity, to Lenk, a beautifully situated village in the very midst of mountains and glaciers, the grand Wildstrubel with its large glacier and rugged rock being full in front. From this ice region close at hand, innumerable streams descend to swell the torrent of the Simmen, which itself rises in the same district. Its source, known as the *Sieben Brunnen*, lies about six miles south of Lenk, and a delightful excursion, occupying four or five hours, going and returning, may be made thither.

At Lenk there is a choice of two routes. If the return to Thun has to be made, the upper valley of the Simmen must be descended to Zweisimmen, where the diligence will take the tourist to Thun. But if the mountain walks are to be extended, the two beautiful passes of the *Trüttlisberg* and the *Chrinnen* should be crossed, to *Gsteig*. This is a pleasant walk of seven or eight hours. Gsteig itself is still more grandly situated than Lenk, and is completely shut in by the perpendicular walls of the Oldenhorn and the Sanetschhorn. Here again, if the traveller wishes to return, he may descend the valley in which Gsteig is situated, and strike the carriage road between Thun and Vevey at Saanen; or another day or two may be added to the excursion by keeping to the mountains over the *Col de Pillon* to *Sepey* and *Aigle*. Here the valley of the Rhone is entered, and Villeneuve, Montreux, and Vevey, are all within easy reach by rail. After a night spent at one of these places, *Château d'Oex* may be reached by the *Col de Jaman*. This pass crosses a low range which skirts the south-eastern corner of the Lake of Geneva, and though its summit level does not reach five thousand feet, yet the view from it is extensive and singularly beautiful, stretching over the blue waters of the lake, and including the Savoy mountains beyond. At Château d'Oex the carriage-road to Thun is again reached.

The Lakes of Thun and Brienz are much about the same size, that of Thun being somewhat the larger, and at the same time the more picturesque, of the two. Probably at some distant time they formed one lake, but the accumulations brought down by several small mountain streams have succeeded in separating them by a piece of low land some two miles in length, now known as the *Bödeli*. On this strip of land lie the two well-known villages

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of Unterseen and Interlachen—the former an ancient, the latter a more modern settlement—both by their names indicating their positions between the lakes.

Interlachen is deservedly a favourite place of resort for visitors who do not come to Switzerland to work hard at sight-seeing, but who desire to see many of the chief beauties of the country with as little exertion as possible.

'Besides being a central point amidst many grand objects which may hence be conveniently visited, Interlachen is surely in itself one of the most charming places in the world. Imagine two noble lakes each lying among mountains, joined by a wide, deep, rapid, and translucent river, from the right hand margin of which rises a long line of hill feathered with rich woods; and that along the left hand shore, or divided from it only by meadows and gardens, extends a walnut-tree shaded avenue with its airy pleasure-houses. Suppose yourself in that avenue, and with the murmur of the stream in your ears, look to the left across a flat vale intersected with trees, to a sterner line of hills, and in the midst of these a mighty break, through which appears a huddled mass of snowy tops, with a round dome like a globe of snow, of purest white above them, and a little removed from it to the left, a peak as white—learn that the peak is the summit of the Jungfrau, and the globe below, the untrodden Silver Horn,* and you may conceive how lovely Interlachen *is*, and what visions of greatness it discloses. The only apprehension which can break the dream of beauty and grandeur in which you move, arises from the English names you read on every house—for all are hotels—or the English voices you hear laughing or whispering as you pass, suggesting the fear that some London acquaintance may join you and bring back the cares, the scandals, and the controversies, of the world you have quitted. To meet a friend who entirely sympathises in your enjoyment may heighten it, if it *can* be heightened; but to meet one whom you know too well to avoid, and too little to rejoice in; whom your best moral impulses compel you to seek, and your tastes would induce you to shun; whose moral being (a little world in itself) to you invisible and imperfectly known, presents a perplexing problem to petty, irritating, irritated curiosity, so unlike the great repose of the silent masses which you have travelled to behold, and in whose awful presence you stand—is an event to be feared.'†

Interlachen lies at the mouth of the beautiful valley of Lauterbrunnen, and

* The Silver Horn has, since the above was written, been ascended—first in 1863. The Jungfrau has long since ceased to have any claim to that title—the virgin snows on its summit were first reached in 1811.

† Talfourd's 'Vacation Rambles.'

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the white mass of the Jungfrau seems to close the farther end of this valley, and is the one prominent distant object from the village. The hills, which lie close at hand, afford delightful walks, while the very centre of the Oberland district is not far distant, the Valley of Lauterbrunnen forming the channel by which it may be reached. Some good guide-book, such as Bädeker's useful and handy volume, must be referred to constantly, in order to visit the many points of interest which abound in the surrounding neighbourhood.

Post Office, Interlachen.

The principal sight on the Lake of Brienz is the celebrated waterfall, called the *Giessbach*, which is formed by a small stream of that name descending from the Faulhorn. This may be easily reached by the steamboat which constantly plies on the lake between Brienz and Interlachen.

The Giessbach is properly a series of seven cascades, which derive their notoriety more from the exquisite foliage and rich verdure by which they are surrounded, than from the greatness of their depth, or for the volume of water discharged by them. Bridges have been built over the torrent in front of most of the falls, and the traveller can safely pass behind one of

The Lake of Brienz, showing the Giessbach.

them, and look at the landscape beyond through the veil of transparent water.

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The falls are frequently illuminated during the summer, when a strange and weird effect is produced; but most persons will agree that these lovely specimens of Nature's handiwork are, 'when unadorned, adorned the most.'

There is a pathetic little story connected with this spot, which may here fitly find a place.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE FALLS.

A little boat was speeding on alone, swiftly diminishing the short distance between the village of Brienz and the Giessbach Falls. The time was that of a past generation, and no commodious but prosaic inn disturbed the sanctity and awe of rushing waters and lonely woods. The boat was impelled by a stout young Switzer, and opposite to him reclined an English lad, sturdy and handsome, who was languidly thinking that but for the needless trouble of the work in that hot summer sun, he would have liked to show the boatman the full power and efficacy of the renowned Cambridge stroke.

Humphrey V—— was the only child of a good old hunting squire in the fine hunting county of Lincoln. In order that he might do as his father had done and be made a gentleman in the orthodox way, he had been sent to the University; but nothing was farther from the expectation of the honest old squire than that any son of his should take honours. Honours, however, the young man had triumphantly achieved; perhaps the broad brow inherited from his mother accounted for that.

Finally, Squire V——, much delighted, and more surprised by his son's unexpected successes, offered him (what was then a less common boon than now) permission to make the *grand tour*, three months' leave of absence, and a well-filled purse to back it.

Two of those months had swiftly fled, and here was Humphrey beginning the third on the romantic lake of Brienz. The close of it found him still there.

The boat stopped, with a jerk and a rebound, against the little ledge of rock and turf, beside which the water comes pouring and dancing down. Bidding his conductor wait for him, the young man jumped ashore and stopped to watch the falls.

The firs threw their rich fringes of velvety green across the lacy whiteness of the spray; little turfy knolls rose up among the foliage, and gave to the place a home-like aspect as of an English park with added glories of a certain wild romance. Presently he began to ascend beside the falls.

Now, as all travellers know, one of the many cascades bells out in a hollow sheet, like a full sail of glass, and behind it passes a little path or

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shelf of rock. At the present day it is a little gallery, perfectly safe, and people stand there in a cooling shower and see the landscape through the moving silvery veil, and say how curious it is! But at *that* time there was some risk and valour in standing on that narrow ledge, and Humphrey had been properly warned by the boatman to beware if he should venture thereupon. He had, of course, resolved to venture, but having reached the spot, and when he was about to step upon the little shelf, he started back, for some one was already there,—a young girl closely wrapped in a cloak, and leaning back against the wall of rock behind her, her eyes fixed on the picture before her—landscape seen through shifting water—and an infantine smile of joyous admiration on her lips.

The mere charm and strangeness of the scene would have lent a grace to the maiden there had such been wanting; as it was, they only served to heighten the actual beauty of her appearance. She was very lovely, with a wild piquante loveliness; her complexion of a clear rich brown with the warm red mantling beneath it; long lashes shaded the 'sweetest eyes were ever seen,' and a coil of splendid hair crowned all. Moreover, there was something in the countenance of the innocent rest of a sleeping child. She was utterly ignorant that she was being watched, and, fearful of giving her a shock if she should suddenly perceive him, Humphrey held back in the shelter of a large pine. But he could not tear himself from the spot. There was a fascination in that dark rich naïve beauty. Fresh from his classical studies, Humphrey thought of wood-nymphs and naïads, and at the moment was not far behind any ancient Greek in the belief in such divinities. He cast himself upon the short, pleasant grass beneath the pines, whose aromatic fragrance was delicately intoxicating, and watched her, as half uncertain if she would not presently fade into air, glide down upon that gliding bell of water, or unfold her mantle, which, once of fine rich colours, subdued by time and wear into dim picturesque richness, and falling in the folds which none but the most costly material can assume, looked as if it might at any moment develope into broad wings, and she soar upward and be lost in a cloud.

But no such mystic vision was presented. At the end of a time, of whose length Humphrey could keep no account, she moved from her position, with a little tremor as of cold, and with a shade of sadness dropping over the clear simplicity of her face. Then, throwing aside her cloak, and showing beneath it the daintiest of shapes, clad in a dress of black, short, simple, and coarse, she stepped fearlessly along the ledge and out upon the turf. She did not see the young Englishman; she never cast her eyes towards the spot where he lay, but with firm light step moved quickly up the winding path.

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When Humphrey V—— regained the boat, he asked his guide who the girl might be.

'You have seen the Daughter of the Falls, Mein Herr,' he said.

Visions of wood-nymphs recurred to the young Englishman.

'What is she?' he asked.

The boatman told him, as such folk will, a long, long story, which amounted to this. When troublous times began in France, an old French gentleman suddenly appeared in that lonely spot with a little girl for his sole companion. The old man's splendid manner—'manners of a prince,' remarked the Switzer,—awed and impressed the simple people of Brienz, and his daughter's beauty and sweet bright ways fascinated them, and caught all their hearts to her. But after the first, when the little inn was their necessary shelter, Brienz saw the French gentleman but seldom. He found an old *châlet* among the hills, and dwelt there, paying a trifle of rent to the owner of the land; fed by the simplest food bought from the peasants, and by the milk of a goat, his child's sole plaything and companion. A poor deformed goitred orphan of that country side found, with gratitude and rejoicing, a peaceful home in their service; and so they abode among the hills, seen by scarcely any person but the old Pfarrer of that district, who assisted in the girl's education. At last, not one year before that time at which the tale was told, the old French nobleman had died; a quiet funeral had passed out of the doors of that little house, and the beautiful girl and her deformed and dwarfish servant accompanied the coffin as sole mourners to its last resting-place. The maiden had been seen more frequently since that time. Having lost her one dear friend, she seemed to find a solace and a friend in the beauties of Nature around her. She was often observed by the mountain goatherds far up towards the majestic mass of the Faulhorn, or at sunset standing motionless on a peak nearer to her home. But most she loved the Giessbach. The boatman himself had frequently found her seated beside it lost in thought or contemplation. She lived alone with the ugly little maid-servant. It was said that the Pfarrer had offered them a shelter in his modest home; but the girl had not accepted it. She could not leave the roof beneath which her father had died. People had discovered that a little money reached her regularly from some unknown source, and the simple wants of the two were supplied as before by ready purchase. But the lady remained a mystery and a delight to the country folk, who regarded her with distant reverential love, and, knowing no other name, had lately given to her that of the Daughter of the Falls.

It were too long to tell how fondly the young Englishman's heart dwelt on the story of its lonely heroine, or with what tremors of hope and fear he again sought the place, laughing at himself, yet unable to control the

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The Giessbach.

feeling. She was not there. But another time he was more fortunate; for a little above the bell of water he found her seated near the falls, her hands clasped around her knees, her gaze fixed upon the stream. She moved as he approached. He spoke French with considerable ease, and said gallantly, but feeling a sort of trembling awe, as if addressing some mysterious and sacred being,—

'Mademoiselle, ne vous dérangez pas.'

'Ah! Ciel!' she cried, in a low, fervent tone, clasping her hands as she looked at him with those great innocent eyes, 'c'est le langage de mon pays.'

Then, recollecting herself, she would have turned away, but Humphrey made some slight remark upon the beauty of the place. She answered him, and then she went away with

Interlaken from the Lake of Brienz.

the graceful, silent dignity of a princess. He did not find her again at the

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falls, but he penetrated to her half-ruined *chalet*, and begged a draught of water from the goitred maid. She must needs consult her mistress, who, with the liberality of noble blood, ordered that their sole draught of goat's milk should be given to the stranger, and brought it out herself in a wooden bowl. There was in her movements and her action the simple pride of patriarchal times. Involuntarily Humphrey thought, 'He asked for water and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.' But this young Jael ran no nail into the temples of her guest; she did but press more deeply into his heart an arrow already fixed there.

A month had passed before Humphrey thought of leaving Brienz. His holiday was over, and yet he felt that to leave the little, noble, dark-eyed Julie de Conin (he knew her name now) would be to leave a part of himself behind. What could he do? His father—his dear old father—had all the dear old English prejudice against foreigners. To plead his own cause in writing would be death to Humphrey's hopes. He fondly thought that, were he but so happy as to win her, Julie could gain the heart of any man alive, his father among the rest; and instinct told him his mother would stand his friend. He deliberated, and could not decide; and then by chance he met her, and told her he was going, and a look of sudden blank despair came over her face, and then instinctive womanly reserve rushed up to hide it, and transformed her from the child that she had seemed. But the die was cast; Humphrey, in his worst French and his fondest tones, told his honest story, and—bore Julie home as his wife.

* * * * * * * *

There was joy in the old hall in Lincolnshire when it was known that Mr. Humphrey was coming home. Bells were rung and bonfires were lighted, and when the traveller re-entered at the great oak door his mother was there to kiss him, and his father to shake him by the hand, and the servants in two rows to curtsey and smile a welcome. His mother was the first to see there was something amiss, before he brought out his hesitating announcement that there was some one else to introduce to his dear parents.

'A friend made on your travels, my boy?' said the father, in a cheery voice; 'well, bring him in, we will make him welcome for your sake, though he should be a French Mounseer who can't speak the king's English, nor drink good British ale.'

'Who is it, Humphrey?' asked the mother, breathlessly.

'It is my wife!' answered Humphrey. 'Oh, mother! love her for my sake;' and then he hastened out.

The parents looked on one another with dismay. This was, then, the end of the *grand tour*. They were so utterly confounded by the suddenness of the blow, that they had not time to work up the rage into which the father,

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at least, would have been sure otherwise to fall in true British style. They had only time to picture to themselves the portrait of a black-browed, forbidding foreigner. It was touching to see the two old folks standing there, trembling with their emotion, and holding each other by the hand, as if thus to give and receive help for the shock which they momentarily expected to fall upon them in the aspect of their unknown daughter-in-law.

Presently their son returned, leading and supporting his timid little wife. She wore a little rose-coloured travelling hood, which framed her sweet face in the prettiest way; and when her trembling feet had brought her to her new parents, she looked up at them with the sweet, pleading expression of a loving child which has been corrected. Crossing her hands on her breast, she made a movement as if to kneel before them, saying, in graceful, broken English, learned from her husband, 'Pray forgive me, and love me if you can.'

The old man turned aside to hide the workings of his face, but the mother took her new child in her arms, kissed her, and placed her hand in her husband's, saying, 'Father dear, let us ask God's blessing on our new daughter.'

It was not long before the little Julie had won her way to all hearts in that dull Lincolnshire society; she was its life and brightness; her songs, her laughter, her pretty, childlike, winning ways, her picturesque foreign fashions of dress, which could not be reduced to tameness by her most fervent desire to please her mother-in-law and to be 'quite English,'—all these formed the gossip, the amusement of the place; admired by some, censured by others, but loved perforce by all.

So sped on three happy years. But by the end of that time it began to be remarked, first by the neighbours, and last of all by the inmates of the old Hall, that the little French lady was wasting away. Her cheek was always pale except when deeply tinged by a sudden and painful flush; her laugh was rarer and forced; she could do but very little now without undergoing great fatigue. All this had crept on insensibly to those who were always with her, but at last strangers with cruel kindness opened their eyes, and henceforth there was little joy in the great old house. She tried to laugh the notion away at first, but now they could no more be blinded, and soon they perceived that it was all but too fatally true.

At last one evening, to her husband alone, she confessed that, dear as the *people* now near her were to her heart, and grateful as she was for their kindness, the dull flat country, the spiritless air, were a constant pain and trial to her. A part of her life seemed left behind among her mountains. She could not get used to the lack of them. Poor Julie! she tried to explain away her confession on the morrow, when she saw how much it

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pained her husband; but he knew she had spoken truly, and thenceforth he laid a plan to take her once more to her old home.

There were many things to arrange, however, before he could be spared for a lengthened sojourn abroad; and there were hard battles to fight with the old squire, and even with his wife, who could hardly be brought to believe that any better or more health-giving air could be found in the world than in their own beloved country. Thus some months slipped by and the evil was consummated. But at last the husband and wife started on their journey, though Humphrey saw only too well that it was but carrying his Julie to a grave in a foreign land.

It was about the same season at which they had first met when Humphrey and his wife reached Brienz. All was joyous, bright, and very peaceful. There were peace and joy too in Julie's heart. She seemed reunited to her very self, left behind there with foaming water and sublime summits. The bitterness of death was past: that had been when she bade farewell to her parents in England; and for her husband—she knew they did not part for ever. It was Heaven's will that she should go, but she was glad that her last glance would rest on the landscape she loved so.

She had been there little more than a week when Humphrey, with much pains, had carried her some distance up opposite that fall behind which was the rocky path. She asked her husband to go and stand there. When he returned to her she lay on her cushion beneath the pines, watching the falling water and dashing spray.

'While you were there,' she said, 'I fancied myself in your place, and thought I was a girl again. I know so well how the dear landscape looks through that veil of water. I would not be a girl again,—oh, no, but it is sweet to have the old thoughts once more.'

She lay and watched the cascade as long as Humphrey dared let her stay there. She never got so far again. But she begged that they might abide in a cottage where the pretty inn now stands, and daily she watched her beloved Giessbach.

The country folk remembered her well, and were proud that the Daughter of the Falls had returned to them again.

At last the end came. Julie's eyes were turned towards the falls; Humphrey was reading, by her desire, from the Book of Revelation. There was at that moment a rainbow on the cascade, and at the same instant he was reading the words:—'And a rainbow round about the throne.'

'I see it, dear,' she said; and that was the last of all.

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INTERLACHEN TO LAUTERBRUNNEN.

The Staubbach.

South of Interlachen there lies a beautiful narrow dale, shut in by high precipitous rocks, over which innumerable small cascades fall into the mountain brook which runs at their base. This is the lovely valley of Lauterbrunnen ('nothing but springs'), a delightful region, full of exquisite near sights. The small village of Lauterbrunnen is about seven miles from Interlachen, an easy morning's walk; and close to the village, descends from the rocky ledges on the west, the queen of cascades, the Staubbach, glorious in its frail beauty. The visitor, however, must not expect too much from this far-famed waterfall, and must not be surprised if the first sight should be disappointing. Its name, 'the dust brook,' best describes it, for the water of the stream by which it is formed becomes converted in its fall into silvery water-dust or spray, which seems to float down the air in a series of *pulsations*. Tennyson has well caught and described this singular appearance when he speaks of the 'slender stream,' which, 'like a *downward smoke*,'—

'Along the cliff *to fall, and pause, and fall*, did seem.'

The Wengern Alp.

Byron's grotesque image where he likens the fall to 'the pale courser's

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tail,' of Death in the Apocalypse, will be rejected by every beholder as strained and inapplicable, while if the visitor sees the cascade when the clouds are low, he will recognise the beauty and truth of Wordsworth's expression, 'a heaven-born waterfall.'

By ascending the cliffs by a somewhat precipitous but not difficult path, the brook which forms the Staubbach may be crossed, and if continued, the road will lead to the upland village of Mürren. Here a glorious sight displays itself; the great giants of the Bernese Oberland are full in front, separated from the spectator only by a narrow valley. The clearness of the air at this great height (5400 feet) causes the mountains to look much nearer than they really are, while the elevation brings clearly to view the glaciers and sheets of pure white snow which cover their upper slopes. One can imagine that it was this sight which inspired Tennyson with that fine passage at the end of the 'Princess,'—

'Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height;
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang),
In height in cold, the splendour of the hills?
But cease to move so near the heavens, and cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come then down
And find him: by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With Death and Morning on the silver horns,
Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors:
But follow: let the torrent dance thee down
To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
The monstrous ledges to slope, and spill
Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
That like a broken purpose waste in air;
So waste not thou; but come; for all the vales
Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
Myriads of rivulets hurrying through the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.'

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LAUTERBRUNNEN TO REICHENBACH, OR MEIRINGEN.

In passing up the valley of Lauterbrunnen the traveller will have noticed near the village of Zweilütschinen the junction of two streams. These are the Weisse Lütschine, descending from the upper valley of Lauterbrunnen, and the Schwarze Lütschine, draining the valley of Grindelwald. A good carriage-road leads along the banks of the latter to the village of Grindelwald, but a fairly good pedestrian will, after passing a night at Lauterbrunnen, climb the slopes to the east of the village, and reach Grindelwald by the Wengern Alps and the Little Scheideck. This is a walk of eight or nine hours. It should be begun easily and with patience, the sharp zigzags by which the path ascends from the valley being somewhat fatiguing. The road lies first through pine-woods, and, after an hour or more spent in overcoming the first ascent, turns southward and proceeds parallel to the valley of Lauterbrunnen, which from this point is distinctly seen with the Staubbach in the distance. After a while the path turns to the east, and a glorious view into the heart of Bernese Oberland begins to unfold itself. On reaching the little inn at the summit of the Wengern Alp, the Jungfrau lies full in front, a majestic mass of purest white. Down its slopes avalanches are continually pouring during the daytime, especially soon after noon, when the sun has attained its greatest power. Seen at a distance these falls of ice-fragments look like small threads of snow trickling down the channels worn in the side of the mountain; in reality they consist of vast blocks of ice detached by the heat of the sun from the main mass which clothes the flanks of the mountain, capable of sweeping away in a moment forests and villages, were any there to oppose their course. The noise which accompanies these ice-falls is peculiar, and particularly impressive in the still Alpine air.

'Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below.'*

The Wengern Alp† is the name given to the whole of the mountain pasture-land over which the traveller has just passed; the highest point in

* 'Childe Harold,' iii. 62.

† 'Alp' in the mouth of a Swiss means an upland pasture, not a peak. 'Die Alp ist abgeweidet,' says the shepherd, in the charming scene with which Schiller's 'Tell' opens.

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his ascent is reached in about an hour from leaving the little inn on the Alp. This forms the *Little Scheideck* (sometimes called *Lauterbrunnen-Scheideck*, or *Wengern-Scheideck*), a pass of little more than 6000 feet in elevation. On reaching it a fine view meets the eye, including the whole of the valley of Grindelwald, flanked on the right hand by the vast masses of the Mönch, the Eiger, and the Schreckhorn. After gazing at these a few moments the traveller must hasten on, for Grindelwald is distant a fairly good four hours' walk, and there is not much in the way to interest him.

Grindelwald is a scattered mountain village, lying 3700 feet above the sea. Those who are unable or unwilling to come here across the Wengern Alp, may proceed by carriage from Interlachen by the road which turns out of the valley of Lauterbrunnen at Zweilütschine, and follows up the somewhat uninteresting valley of the Schwarze Lütschine. Grindelwald is a place of great resort, as two extensive glaciers descend into the valley near the village, and these may be reached without the least fatigue or trouble. The gigantic peaks of the Eiger, the Mettenberg, and the Wetterhorn, here form an impenetrable barrier to the valley on the south-east, and the large valleys lying between these mountain masses are filled with vast tracts of ice known as the Upper (*Ober*) and Lower (*Unter*) Grindelwald Glaciers. The Lower Glacier is by far the larger of the two (though it is sometimes called the Little Glacier), and its foot may be reached either on foot or on horseback in three-quarters of an hour. Pedestrians should, however, by no means content themselves with the sight gained from this point, but should, under the conduct of a guide, ascend the glacier to the *Eismeer*, a vast sea of ice, as its name implies. Here the fantastic forms which ice in large masses so frequently assumes may be seen in all their beauty.

The Upper Glacier also well deserves a visit. The ice which forms it is more transparent than that of the Lower Glacier, and the caves at its base considerably larger; but the whole effect is not so grand.

To those who delight in panoramic views such as are to be seen from the summit of the Rigi, the Niesen, &c., Grindelwald affords the best starting-place for scaling the Faulhorn, a prominent isolated peak rising above 8000 feet, lying to the south of the Lake of Brienz, and consequently due north of the village of Grindelwald. The ascent and return may be made in eight hours. The view gained from the summit is exceedingly fine as it includes many of the great peaks of the Oberland, the Finster-Aar-Horn, the Wetterhorn, and the Schreckhorn, and stretches over the Lake of Brienz, and parts of the Lakes of Thun, Lucerne, and Zug, to the range of the Jura. A good deal of the country close at hand, including most of the valley of Grindelwald, is, however, shut out by two summits higher than the Faulhorn itself,—namely, the Simelihorn and Röthihorn.

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Grindelwald.

In passing from Grindelwald to Reichenbach the traveller passes over the *Great Scheideck*, a narrow rocky range running from the Wetterhorn to the Faulhorn. The path is a pleasant and easy one, as the ascent from Grindelwald is not very great. The splendid peak of the Wetterhorn is the one prominent object in this walk. On reaching the summit of the pass and turning round, a magnificent prospect unfolds itself; and in addition to the Wetterhorn, the Schreckhorn, Mönch, and Eiger again appear prominently majestic.

Rosenlaui.

Descending from the Scheideck the road is parallel with the course of the Reichenbach, a mountain-stream, and in about a couple of hours of easy walking the *Baths of Rosenlaui* are reached, embosomed in a pine forest at the foot of the Wellhorn.

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No one will omit to visit the Rosenlaui Glacier, even if the Glaciers of Grindelwald have just before been seen. Nothing can exceed the purity and clearness of the ice here, and the ice crevices take that peculiar shade of semi-transparent bluish-green which forms such a charming rest for the eye, and which utterly baffles all power of imitation.

Leaving the glacier the path continues for some time by the side of the Reichenbach through pleasant green pastures and thick woods, until the descent to the Hasli Thal begins, when the road becomes rugged and steep. Soon afterwards the Reichenbach plunges down in a series of five falls, which, though not very remarkable, may detain the traveller for a few moments if he feel disposed to put up with the small impositions which are levied by the owners of the ground which commands the finest views.

At the foot of the falls will be found a good hotel, which will do away with the necessity of going on to the village of Meiringen, which lies some little distance from the opposite bank of the Aar. Though Meiringen may be taken as a type of a large Bernese village, and though it is finely situated in a deep valley, down the sides of which fall many picturesque cascades, yet there is not much in it or its neighbourhood to detain the visitor. After paying a visit to the pretty little fall of the Alpbach, he will probably hurry on up the valley of the Aar towards the Grimsel. Should, however, his visit here fall in the right season of the year, he will do well to delay his onward journey for a day or two in order to see one of the wrestling-matches (*Schwingfeste*) for which the mountain Swiss are famous. The young men of the *Hasli Thal*, as the valley of the upper Aar is called, are particularly renowned for their skill and strength as wrestlers. The chief *Schwingfeste* in the neighbourhood of Meiringen are held at the *Engstlen-Alp*, July 26: at the *Stadt-Alp* on the first Sunday in August; and on the *Tann-Alp* on the 10th of August. On the first Sunday of August, too, a match is played on the *Wengern-Alp*, just above Lauterbrunnen.

The Engstlen-Alp is distant from Meiringen about seven hours on foot, and lies on the path by which the Joch Pass is crossed to Engelberg. There is a good inn at the village, and, as the neighbourhood is singularly beautiful and the air most invigorating, a rest here of a few days at the time of the wrestling-matches would be well spent.

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FROM MEIRINGEN TO THE GRIMSEL.

This journey will afford further opportunities of penetrating at least into the outskirts of that marvellous mass of glacier which surrounds the Finster Aar Horn. It is a good walk of eight hours, and the pedestrian should be stirring betimes, as the valley becomes as hot as a furnace soon after the sun has gained a little elevation, owing to the vast masses of bare rock which cover the slopes of the mountains.

Soon after leaving Meiringen the valley is obstructed by a well-defined ridge of rocky hill, of no very great elevation, which runs across it at right angles. This is supposed by some to be the remains of the terminal moraine of the vast glacier, which undoubtedly at one time completely filled the Hasli Thal. Others conjecture that the whole valley was once a lake, which has gradually been filled up by the constant deposit of rock and stone upon its bed. However this may be, the low hill above mentioned, called the *Kirchet*, is cut through about its centre by a narrow, deep cleft, with rocky, precipitous sides. Through this gorge, known as the *Finstere Schlauche* (or the *Finster Aar Schlucht*), the Aar now finds its way. By turning a little out of the main road the river may be seen, running between perpendicular walls of rock 300 feet below the spectator; the descent of one of the precipices may also be made without difficulty or danger.

Proceeding up the valley the first village reached is *Im-Hof*, a much more agreeable resting-place than either Meiringen or Reichenbach. It is situated at the point where the *Gadmen Thal* and the *Urbach Thal* open from opposite sides into the Hasli Thal. Excursions up either or both of these valleys will well repay the visitor. Those who intend to return to Meiringen would do well to follow up the Gadmen Thal, and cross by the fine *Susten Pass* to Wasen, where the St. Gothard route is struck. This might be followed on the second day as far as Hospenthal, while the third day would bring the pedestrian to the Grimsel Hospice, by way of the *Furca* and *Rhone Glacier*. Thus the passage both up and down the Hasli Thal would be avoided.

But in preference to the above, the following circular tour of four days is highly recommended, as leading through some magnificent scenery. The Gadmen Thal must first be followed as far as its junction with the *Gentel Thal*. This will lead over the *Joch Pass* to *Engelberg*. On the second day the *Surenen Pass* must be crossed to Altorf (*see* p. 17). The third day will be employed in going up the St. Gothard Road to Hospenthal, whence a fourth day will lead the tourist by way of the Furca to the Grimsel; or the above may be shortened by turning off at Wasen and proceeding by the

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Susten Pass to the starting-point, Im-Hof. Perhaps there are none of the easily accessible Alpine passes which afford such fine scenery as the Joch and the Surenen. In crossing the former the Titlis is the one prominent object; from the latter, the eye stretches on one side over the chief giants of the Bernese Oberland, and on the other over the Alps of Glarus. The beauty of the situation of Engelberg, too, is very striking. Here, under the shadow of a huge rock, *Mons Angelorum*, still stands a large Benedictine monastery, the successor of one founded in the twelfth century. If one is not disposed to credit the tradition that the site was pointed out by angels, one will readily admit that the position is worthy of such a choice. The Benedictines of Engelberg devote themselves to stock-farming and education, and are the owners of considerable property in the valley.

An expedition up the *Urbach Thal* will be tempting to those who delight in glaciers. A walk of ten hours will lead to the foot of the large *Gauli Glacier*, but unless the pedestrian is a good ice-walker he will have to retrace his steps exactly to Im-Hof. Should he be a good mountaineer, he may, with a skilful guide, cross the Gauli Glacier, descend upon the Lauter Aar Glacier, and so, by way of the Unter Aar Glacier, reach the Grimsel. This is, however, a hard walk of fourteen hours, still it leads through magnificent glacier scenery. Proceeding up the Hasli Thal, after five hours' walking the celebrated *Handek* Falls are reached. This fine waterfall is formed by the river Aar plunging at once down a descent of 225 feet. Excluding the falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen, which stand quite by themselves for volume of water and general impressiveness, this is, perhaps, the very finest of all the Alpine waterfalls. The swiftness of the stream which forms it, and the stern grandeur of the scenery around, combine to make it particularly impressive. On bright mornings between ten and eleven o'clock, a beautiful rainbow is formed in the cloud of spray which constantly hangs around the falling water. Byron's fine description of the falls of the Velino at Terni may be applied almost word for word to this, but it may be as well here to recall the fact that the two celebrated Italian cascades at Terni and Tivoli owe their beauty in great measure to Art; the falls of the Handek are purely the work of Nature.

Soon after passing the Handek, the path curves round a huge projecting block of granite, in which a series of steps have been cut for the safe passage of travellers. This is known as the *böse seite*, or 'dangerous slope.' The road soon after crosses a layer of rock (the *Helleplatte*), which has been rendered perfectly smooth by the former action of glaciers. The scratches upon this and similar rocks, and the enormous number of boulders around, abundantly testify to the fact that the whole of this portion of the valley was at one time completely filled by a glacier.

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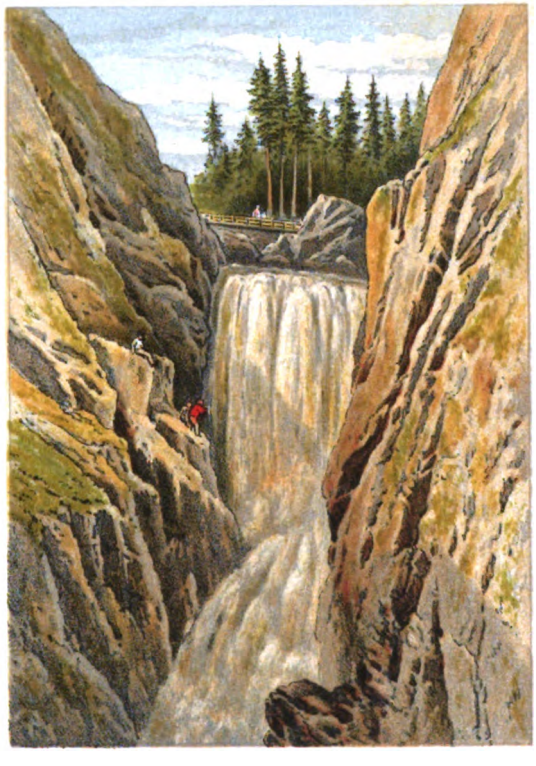
Lake near the Grimsel Hospice.

The *Grimsel Hospice* stands an hour's walk from the summit of the pass, on a flat piece of ground, shut in with mountains. Nothing can be more desolate than the view from this plain, which is known as the *Grimsel Grund*. Bare rocks close the view on all sides, the ground is usually covered with snow, or if not, only shows here and there a scanty patch of herbage. A black lake, whose shores are of snow, completes the desolation of the spot.



The Handek Falls.

The Hospice was originally, like those of the Great St. Bernard, the St. Gothard, &c., a religious foundation, but has in later times been converted into an inn. Though the accommodation to be found there is rough and homely, the traveller will, nevertheless, be glad to reach this refuge, especially if he should chance to approach it at nightfall.

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JOHN Bkl Bod. JOHNSON

FROM THE GRIMSEL TO BRIEG IN THE UPPER VALAIS.

The Grimsel may be made the starting-point for many excursions which will lead into the very heart of the grand glacier scenery of the Bernese Oberland, or which will give fine panoramic views over the same region. Those whose acquaintance with a glacier is limited to the usual sights at Grindelwald and Rosenlaui, will now do well to ascend one of the smaller peaks in the immediate vicinity of the Grimsel, in order to get a general view of a glacier in its entirety. Such a view may be obtained by ascending the *Great Siidelhorn*, a peak in the ridge which separates the Valley of the Rhone from the Oberland. The ascent is neither difficult nor dangerous, but a considerable portion of the path lies over loose, rough stones, in passing over which care is required to avoid awkward twists of the ankle. On reaching the summit the traveller is now nearly 3000 feet above the Grimsel Hospice (9500 feet above the sea), and a fine sight unfolds itself beneath him. The great glaciers of the Aar are seen like frozen streams between well-defined rocky banks—the *moraines*, in reality vast heaps of broken rock which the ice in its passage down the valley has torn from the mountain-side, show as small but distinct markings upon its surface. But, besides this view of the valleys below, the distant mountains here show grandly. The gigantic Finster Aar Horn, the Shreckhorn, with numerous other peaks, rise almost close to the spectator, while in the distance the chain of Monte Rosa, the Matterhorn, and the mountains of the Grisons, are distinctly visible.

A good view, but not so fine as that above described, may be had from the *Little Siidelhorn*, a peak which is passed on the way to its greater name-sake, and which may be ascended at half the expenditure of time and labour.

Besides the above, many excursions may be made from the Grimsel Hospice up either the *Unter-*, or *Ober-Aar Glacier*. These would form a good training for more difficult glacier expeditions. An experienced guide should be taken, and the beginner should be specially careful not to attempt too much at the commencement of his expedition.

The path from the Grimsel Hospice to Obergesteln in the Upper Valais presents no difficulties whatever, but if it has not yet been visited, it would be well for the traveller to turn aside for a couple of hours in order to enlarge his experience of glaciers by visiting the Glacier of the Rhone, which may be reached in two hours and a half from the Grimsel Hospice. The Grimsel *pass* is a passage across the high mountain-chain which forms the northern boundary of the upper valley of the Rhone, and is situated a good hour's walk from the Hospice. On the summit is a small lake, called the *Todten See*, or Lake of the Dead. It is probable that this name

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has attached itself to this sullen pool on account of the barrenness and sterility of all around, but the appellation was rendered fearfully appropriate during the determined and unprecedented struggle of 1799. The Austrians were in possession of the Grimsel pass, and extended their forces for some considerable distance down the Hasli Thal. The French, who were posted lower down the valley, in vain endeavoured to dislodge them, until a treacherous Swiss peasant, imitating unconsciously the example set him more than two thousand years before by Ephialtes, led the French by a side-path close to the unsuspecting Austrians. A fearful struggle took place, and the Austrians were at length forced to retire into the Valais. The Todten See was, upon this occasion, used as a burial-place, both by French and Austrians.

After passing the crest of the pass, the path leads down a somewhat steep slope called the *Maienwand*, or 'blooming slope,' so called from the profusion of Alpine flowers found here in summer-time. The stupendous glacier of the Rhone is now constantly in sight, in appearance like a frozen waterfall. It lies between the Gelmerhorn on the left, and stretches back, terrace beyond terrace, to the foot of the Galenstock, which towers over it on the right. 'It is,' says Mr. Ball,* 'the finest example in the Alps of what may be called the *Fan-shaped glacier*. Originating in a vast basin of *névé*† on the west side of the Galenstock, the ice-stream issues through a comparatively narrow portal, and is then left, free from the pressure of containing walls, to assume its natural form on the slope of the mountain. The result is, that it expands in a beautifully regular horse-shoe form, and the crevasses appear, like the sticks of a fan, to radiate from the centre.' At the foot of the glacier is a large cavern from which pours the dusky waters of the infant Rhone. The stream flows for some considerable distance through a narrow gorge, frequently forming fine falls. By its side runs a rough path which must be followed for upwards of an hour when the first village of the Valais, *Oberwald*, is reached. Here the gorge broadens into a wide and verdant valley, with high chains of mountains on either side, and this kind of scenery is continued for many miles. There is, therefore, nothing to detain the traveller or to cause him to wish to lengthen out the time on his journey. It is advisable to hire a *char*, usually a kind of long wagon with open sides and cross seats, at the next village, *Obergesteln*, which will in a few hours take him to *Viesch*.

No one, unless grievously pressed for time, will pass by Viesch, but will rest a while in order to make the great excursion in this district—the ascent of the *Æggischhorn*, an outlying peak to the south of the Bernese Oberland.

* The 'Central Alps.'

† The upper unconsolidated part of a glacier is called *névé* by the French, *firn* by the Germans.

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rising above the village. A capital inn has been built at the eastern slope of this mountain, which forms an excellent place for a stay of a few days, and which may be made the head-quarters of many delightful mountain and glacier excursions, or botanical rambles.

The first expedition should be made to the summit of the Æggischhorn itself. This will not take more than two hours from the hotel. Half this distance may be traversed by mules, but the remaining half lies over loose, rough rocks which require care. These are the *débris* of the huge rocky masses of which the summit is composed, one portion being loosely piled upon the other. Nothing can be more impressive than the view from the top. First will be noticed the giant peaks of the Oberland, the Finster Aar Horn, the Galenstock, the Mönch, Jungfrau, Eiger, and Aletschhorn. Farther to the south, Monte Rosa and the peculiarly formed Matterhorn are visible. The whole chain of the Pennine Alps may be traced to Mont Blanc; while in the opposite direction rise the great ridges of the Grisons. Below, the spectator sees the vast Aletsch glacier, the largest in the Alps, sweeping along like a frozen river at the foot of the mountain on which he is standing; and touching it on its eastern side the strange Märjelen See.

A second expedition may be made to the Aletsch glacier under the conduct of a good guide, and a third to the *Märjelen See*. This lake lies to the north of the Æggischhorn in a hollow in the mountain ridge. Its waters are always in summer above the freezing-point, and as they wash the eastern side of the glacier they detach large fragments of it which float about its surface like small icebergs. This is one of the most picturesque sights in the whole of the Alps. There is nothing worthy of note in the passage down the valley till the little town of *Brieg* is reached, which lies on the great Simplon route running from Geneva to Milan, and will at once attract notice from the Italian character of many of its buildings.

Unless greatly pressed for time, the traveller will do well to take a carriage at Brieg and proceed to the summit of the Simplon pass, in order to become acquainted with the great mountain-road which traverses it, and which still remains one of the most stupendous pieces of engineering in Europe. After the splendid victory at Marengo, Napoleon decided on making a road across the Alps, which should unite his newly-acquired dominions to those already connected with France on the northern side of that great dividing mountain-chain, and which should afford a ready means of communication between them. The difficulties which he had experienced in crossing the Great St. Bernard, then reckoned the most accessible of Alpine passes, made him determine that the proposed new road should be so constructed as to be passable by any number of men and munitions of war, at any season of the year. The Great Simplon route was accordingly planned, which should unite the valley of the

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The Matterhorn Seen

Upper Rhone with the valley of the Tosa, and so form a communication between the two great towns of Geneva and Milan. The work was begun on the Italian side in 1800, on the Swiss side in 1801, and took six years to complete, though 30,000 men are said to have been engaged upon it at one time. A drive or walk up to the summit of the pass will best show what difficulties were surmounted in this bold undertaking. The breadth of the road is from 25 to 30 feet, the rise being only 1 in 17. Between Brieg and Sesto Calende no less than 611 bridges are crossed, besides which there are miles of massive stone terraces, and ten galleries cut out of the rock, or built of hewn stone, to protect the road from falling avalanches. The chief of these is passed

Brieg

through some little time before reaching the summit. It is called the *Kaltwasser Glacier Gallery*, over which a stream flowing from a neighbouring glacier rushes, and precipitates itself into the depth below, forming a fine waterfall, which may be seen from one of the lateral arches of the gallery. In addition, there are twenty strong stone houses—'Refuges'—built at intervals along the roads to afford a shelter to passers-by, and to house the large band of labourers who are constantly employed in repairing and clearing the road. About half-a-mile below the summit, in the Italian side, stands a Hospice, originally built in part by Napoleon, served by Augustinian canons of the same community as on the Great St. Bernard. Here free-handed hospitality is exercised towards all applicants, entirely free of charge; a poor-box, to receive the contributions of those who can afford to contribute, however, stands in the *salle-à-manger*. A short distance further on is situated the small village of *Simplon* (Ger. *Simpeln*, It. *Sempione*), from which the pass derives its name; and less than an hour's journey further the road passes through the *Ravine of Gondo*, a gorge but little inferior in stern grandeur to the Via Mala. At the end of this ravine a passage has been cut, with incredible labour, through an enormous mass of rock. This tunnel, known as the *Gallery of Gondo*, will remind the visitor forcibly of the *Urner Loch* on the St. Gothard route.

BRIEG TO ZERMATT.

Another glacier region, equalling many portions of that of the Bernese Oberland in grandeur, though not in extent, is situated around Monte Rosa and the adjacent peaks. Of this district the poor little Alpine village of Zermatt is the centre, lying almost at the head of the *Zermatter-*, or *Nicolai-*, or *Visper-Thal*, a narrow valley running due south from the valley of the Upper Rhone, and drained by the small river Visp, which enters the Rhone at the village of the same name.

Visp, *Vispach*, or *Viège*, stands about nine miles lower down the valley than Brieg. The visitor may at once proceed from it towards Zermatt, as there is nothing particularly attractive in the village to detain him, though, should necessity force him to stay a few hours here, he may in strolling about see some stately houses still remaining, formerly the seats of several noble Swiss families. A fine view, too, is seen from the cemetery.

It is a nine-hours' walk from Visp to Zermatt; an hour's rest may be conveniently taken at *St. Niklaus*, about half way, where there is good accommodation. The road first proceeds along the right bank of the Visp torrent,

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crossing to the left bank at the first village, *Neubrück*. At the next village, *Stalden*, the valley divides into two, running nearly parallel to each other, and divided by a spur from Monte Rosa called the *Mischabel*, or *Saaser Grat*. The northern extremity of this chain breaks into a finely-wooded summit, the *Ebiberg*. Each of these valleys is drained by a torrent called the Visp; that flowing from Zermatt is distinguished as the *Gorner Visp*; that which threads the eastern valley, and passes by the well-known village of Saas, as the *Saaser Visp*. The two streams unite at Stalden.

After passing *St. Niklaus*, the chief village of the valley, and the small hamlet of *Herbrigen*, the *Weisshorn* is seen on the right hand, from which descends in a steep slope the *Bies Glacier*, completely overhanging the side of the valley in a heavy white mass. Two or three small villages are then passed, till at length, on crossing a bridge, beneath which the Visp foams at some considerable distance, a mountain-ridge from the right seems to shut in the valley. The path curves round this obstacle, and suddenly the towering pyramid of the Matterhorn—the one prominent object from the neighbourhood of Zermatt—comes fully into view.

The sight of this weird peak, to which the traveller must have been looking forward, is most striking as seen from this distance, and leaves an indelible impression on the mind. It may at first appear not quite to realise his preconceived notions, but when he has become better and more closely acquainted with the mountain, and when removed from its presence, he endeavours to call up its image to his mind, in the majority of instances it will be this first view which rises before him. The sternness of its features when seen closer, is here softened down by the distance, and though its appearance from this point is not so grand as that seen from other places, it is certainly more mysterious. This difference between natural objects when seen close, and at a distance, is a fact which is almost too obvious to be commented upon, or even to be remarked; but it will be worth while to notice how such an apparently trivial subject becomes full of interest when touched by the hand of a master. 'Are not all natural things, it may be asked, as lovely near as far away? Nay, not so. Look at the clouds, and watch the delicate sculpture of their alabaster sides, and the rounded lustre of their magnificent rolling. They were meant to be beheld far away; they were shaped for their place, high above your head; approach them, and they fuse into vague mists, or whirl away in fierce fragments of thunderous vapour. Look at the crest of the Alp from the far-away plains over which its light is cast, whence human souls have communion with it by their myriads. The child looks up to it in the dawn, and the husbandman in the burden and heat of the day, and the old man in the going down of the sun, and it is to them all as the Celestial City on the world's horizon; dyed

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with the depth of heaven, and clothed with the calm of eternity. There was it set for holy dominion by Him who marked for the sun his journey, and bade the moon know her going down. It was built for its place in the far-off sky; approach it, and, as the sound of the voice of man dies away about its foundation, and the tide of human life, shallowed upon the vast aërial shore, is at last met by the Eternal "Here shall thy waves be stayed," the glory of its aspect fades into blanched fearfulness; its purple walls are rent into grisly rocks, its silver fretwork saddened into wasting snow; the storm-brands of ages are on its breast, the ashes of its own ruin lie solemnly on its white raiment. Nor in such instances as these alone, though, strangely enough, the discrepancy between apparent and actual beauty is greater in proportion to the unapproachableness of the object, is the law observed. For every distance from the eye, there is a peculiar kind of beauty, or a different system of lines of form; the sight of that beauty is reserved for that distance, and for that alone. If you approach nearer, that kind of beauty is lost, and another succeeds, to be disorganised and reduced to strange and incomprehensible means and appliances in its turn. If you desire to perceive the great harmonies of the form of a rocky mountain, you must not ascend upon its sides. All is there disorder and accident, or seems so; sudden starts of its shattered beds hither and thither; ugly struggles of unexpected strength from under the ground; fallen fragments, toppling one over another into more helpless fall. Retire from it, and, as your eye commands it more and more, as you see the ruined mountain-world with a wider glance, behold! dim sympathies begin to busy themselves in the disjointed mass; line binds itself into stealthy fellowship with line; group by group the helpless fragments gather themselves into ordered companies; new captains of hosts and masses of battalions become visible one by one, and far away answers of foot to foot, and of bone to bone, until the powerless chaos is seen risen up with girded loins, and not one piece of all the unregarded heap could now be spared from the mystic whole.'*

Zermatt itself is a miserable Alpine village, situated nearly 5000 feet above the sea. A few years ago both it and its neighbourhood were unknown beyond the limits of Switzerland, but lately it has become a great head-quarters for summer tourists. This has been chiefly due to the members of the English Alpine Club, who were attracted to the spot by the majesty of the surrounding mountains, and more especially by the hitherto inaccessible Matterhorn, which seemed continually to tempt them to risk life and limb upon its rocky precipices. Zermatt stands amongst green meadows diversified by clumps of dark pines, into which descend vast sheets of glacier from the flanks of Monte

* Ruskin, 'The Stones of Venice,' I. xxi. 17, 18.

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The Matterhorn.

Rosa and the Matterhorn. Three of these stand out from the rest by their size and majesty—the *Gorner* glacier, the *Findelen* glacier, and the *Zmutt* glacier; and these and their surroundings form interesting objects for excursions from the village.

Zermatt.

The first excursion which will be taken by the visitor will probably be to the *Riffelberg* and the *Gorner Grat*.

The Riffelberg is a considerable mountain-mass, lying at right angles to the valley of the Visp and parallel to the great chain of the Pennine Alps, in or near which Monte Rosa and the Matterhorn are situated. To the south of it pours down the Gorner glacier; to the north of it the Findelen glacier; both proceeding in a westerly direction. The *Gorner*

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Grat is the *eastern* portion of this ridge, overhanging the glacier of the same name. On the *western* portion, to which the term *Riffelberg* is frequently confined, an hotel has been built which is distinctly visible from the village. It may be reached in about three hours, a considerable part of the walk lying through pleasant pine-woods and heather-covered slopes. A guide is scarcely necessary, unless to carry luggage, but still the path may be missed if care is not taken. A fine view is seen from the small platform on which the hotel stands; a still finer one from the Gorner Grat, at the eastern extremity of the ridge. Here a magnificent panorama unfolds itself; mountains and glaciers surround the spectator on all sides. To the south-east the several peaks of Monte Rosa rise out of slopes of the purest snow. To this succeeds a long ridge—the Lyskamm—followed by the Zwillinge (Jumeaux), or Twins, Castor and Pollux, and the fine bold peak of the Breithorn. On the west the mysterious Matterhorn raises itself out of fields of snow. This seems linked by several well-defined peaks to the Weisshorn on the north-east, and the Mischabel on the north. At the foot of the spectator the huge Gorner glacier forms an apparently insuperable barrier between him and the giants to the south. The whole scene is one of stern grandeur and sublimity.

It must be acknowledged that, in the above view, Monte Rosa, though singularly beautiful in outline, yields in majesty to the Matterhorn, which is by far the most striking object in the panorama. The visitor will desire to make a closer acquaintance with this unique obelisk of rock, and this may be easily accomplished in a walk of a few hours, by ascending for some little distance the Zmutt glacier. What is seen from this point must be told in the words of the eloquent and pictorial writer already quoted:—'The ice opens into broad white fields and furrows, hard and dry, scarcely fissured at all except just under the Cervin, and forming a silent and solemn causeway, paved as it seems with white marble from side to side, sufficiently broad for the march of an army in line of battle, but quiet as a street of tombs in a buried city, and bordered on each hand by ghostly cliffs of that faint granite purple which seems in its far-away height as unsubstantial as the dark blue that bounds it: the whole scene so changeless and soundless, so removed—not merely from the presence of men, but even from their thoughts; so destitute of all life, of tree and herb, and so immeasurable in its lonely brightness of majestic death, that it looks like a world from which not only the human but the spiritual presences had perished, and the last of its archangels, building the great mountains for their monuments, had laid themselves down in the sunlight to an eternal rest, each in his white shroud.

'The structure of the mass of the Matterhorn, and the long ranges of horizontal, or nearly horizontal, beds which form its crest, showing in black points like arrow-heads through the snow, where their ridges are left projecting

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by the avalanche channels, are better seen here than at any other point I reached, together with the sweeping and thin zones of sandy gneiss below, bending apparently like a coach-spring; and the notable point about the whole is, that this under-bed of seemingly the most delicate substance is that prepared by Nature to build her boldest precipice with, it being this bed which emerges at the two bastions or shoulders before noticed, and which by that projection causes the strange oblique distortion of the whole mountain-mass as it is seen from Zermatt.

'And our surprise will still be increased as we farther examine the materials of which the whole mountain is composed. In many places its crystalline slates, where their horizontal surfaces are exposed along the projecting beds of their foundations, break into ruin so total that the foot dashes through their loose red flakes as through heaps of autumn leaves; and yet, just where their structure seems most delicate, just where they seem to have been swept before the eddies of the streams that first accumulated them, in the most passive whirls, there the after-ages have knit them into the most massive strength, and there have hewn out of them those firm grey bastions of the Cervin,—overhanging, smooth, flawless, unconquerable! For, unlike the Chamouni aiguilles, there is no aspect of destruction about the Matterhorn cliffs. They are not torn remnants of separating spires, yielding flake by flake, and band by band, to the continual process of decay. They are, on the contrary, an unaltered monument, seemingly sculptured long ago, the huge walls retaining yet the forms into which they were first engraven, and standing like an Egyptian temple,—delicate-fronted, softly-coloured, the suns of uncounted ages rising and falling upon it continually, but still casting the same line of shadows from east to west; still, century after century, touching the same purple stains on the lotus pillars; while the desert sand ebbs and flows about their feet, as those autumn leaves of rock lie heaped and weak about the base of the Cervin.

'Is not this a strange type in the very heart and height of these mysterious Alps—these wrinkled hills in their snowy, cold, grey-haired old age, at first so silent, then, as we keep quiet at their feet, muttering and whispering to us garrulously in broken and dreamy fits, as it were, about their childhood?—is it not a strange type of the things which "out of weakness are made strong?" If one of those little flakes of mica-sand, hurried in tremulous spangling along the bottom of the ancient river, too light to sink, too faint to float, almost too small for sight, could have had a mind given to it as it was at last borne down with its kindred dust into the abysses of the stream, and laid (would it not have thought?) for a hopeless eternity in the dark ooze, the most despised, forgotten, and feeble of all earth's atoms; incapable of any use or change; not fit, down there in the diluvial darkness, so much as to help an earth-

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wasp to build its nest, or feed the first fibre of a lichen: what would it have thought had it been told that one day, knitted into a strength as of imperishable iron, rustless by the air, infusible by the flame, out of the substance of it, with its fellows, the axe of God should hew that Alpine tower; that against *it*—poor, helpless, mica flake!—the wild north winds should rage in vain; beneath *it*—low-fallen mica flake!—the snowy hills should lie bowed like flocks of sheep, and the kingdoms of the earth fade away in unregarded blue; and around *it*—weak, wave-drifted mica flake!—the great war of the firmament should burst in thunder, and yet stir it not; and the fiery arrows and angry meteors of the night fall blunted back from it into the air; and all the stars in the clear heaven should light, one by one as they rose, new cressets upon the points of snow that fringed its abiding-place on the imperishable spire?'*

Perhaps the only drawback to the valley of Zermatt is, that except by crossing a very high snow pass, there is no way of regaining the ordinary tourist paths but by descending the long valley to Visp, which has already been ascended. Still the difficulty of crossing the main chain by the Alpine gateway which lies to the south of Zermatt, the *St. Théodule* pass, or *Matterjoch*, has been greatly exaggerated. It may be undertaken by even a very moderate mountaineer with perfect safety and ease; indeed, mules may be taken quite over the pass should any danger of over-fatigue be apprehended. The passage is strongly recommended, as grand views are obtained on the whole of the journey. The walk from Zermatt over the St. Théodule to *Bricul* in the *Val Tournanche*, will take from nine to ten hours; and it is necessary to be on the way early, some time before the sun has risen, in order that the snow may be crossed before it has been softened by the heat. An early start not only gives the traveller this great advantage, but it also adds a pleasant air of mystery to the expedition, which will be found considerably to lighten the fatigue of the journey. The path ascends steeply, first through grass slopes, and then through pine-woods; the surrounding mountains, which, on first starting, appear as black shadows, grow more and more distinct as the morning light penetrates the cool air. The tips of the highest mountains are gradually rendered rosy by the sun not yet visible; radiant arrows are shot out across the summits, and soon the great luminary becomes partially visible, and the whole landscape is revealed, and speedily flooded with light. The effect of sun-rise or sun-set upon the mind is always solemn and striking—never more so when seen under unusual circumstances, as, for example, at sea or among the mountains. Never has this been more eloquently remarked than by a modern writer of singular originality and power: 'There is no sight in nature more elevating than the

* Ruskin, 'Modern Painters,' Vol. IV. part v. chap. xvi. par. 13, 15, 16, 17.

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dawn, even to *us*, whom philosophy would wish to teach that *nil admirari* is the highest wisdom. Yet in ancient times, the power of admiring was the greatest blessing bestowed upon mankind; and when could man have admired more intensely, when could his heart have been more gladdened and overflowing with joy than at the approach of "the lord of light, of life, of love, of gladness?"

Stalden.

'The darkness of night fills the human heart with despondency and awe, and a feeling of fear and anguish sets every nerve trembling. Then is man like a forlorn child, fixing his eye with breathless anxiety upon the East—the womb of day—where the light of the world has flamed up so many times before. As the father waits the birth of his child, so the poet watches the dark, heaving night, who is to bring forth her bright son—the sun of the day. The doors of heaven seem slowly to open, and what are called the bright flocks of the dawn step out of the dark stable, returning to their wonted pastures. Who has not seen the gradual advance of this radiant procession, the heavens, like a distant sea, tossing its golden waves, when the first rays shoot forth like brilliant horses racing round the whole course of the horizon—when the clouds begin to colour up, each shedding her own radiance, over her more distant sisters!

Valley of Saas.

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Not only the east, but the west, and the south, and the north—the whole temple of heaven is illuminated, and the pious worshipper lights in response his own small light at the altar of his hearth, and stammers words which express but faintly the joy that is in nature, and in his own throbbing heart, "Rise! our life, our spirit has come back! the darkness is gone, the light approaches!"

'If the people of antiquity called these eternal lights of heaven their gods, their bright ones (*deva*), the *Dawn* was the first-born among all the gods—*Protogenia*,—dearest to man, and always young and fresh. But if not raised to an immortal state, if only admired as a kind being, awakening every morning the children of men, her life would seem to be short. She soon fades away, and dies when the fountain-head of light rises in naked splendour and sends his first swift glance through the vault of heaven. We cannot realize that sentiment with which the eye of antiquity dwelt on these sights of nature. To us, all is law, order, necessity. We calculate the refractory power of the atmosphere, we measure the possible length of the dawn in every climate, and the rising of the sun is to us no greater surprise than the birth of a child. But if we could believe again that there was in the sun a being like our own, that in the dawn there was a soul open to human sympathy—if we could bring ourselves to look for a moment upon these powers as personal, free, and adorable, how different would be our feelings at the blush of day! That Titanic assurance with which we say the sun must rise, was unknown to the early worshippers of nature, or if they also began to feel the regularity with which the sun and the other stars perform their daily labours, they still thought of free beings kept in temporary servitude, chained for a time, and bound to obey a higher will, but sure to rise like Herakles to a higher glory at the end of their labours. It seems to us childish when we read in the Veda such expressions as "Will the Sun rise?" "Will our old friend the Dawn come back again?" "Will the powers of darkness be conquered by the God of light?" And when the sun rose they wondered how, but just born, he was so mighty, and strangled, as it were, in his cradle the serpents of the night. They asked how he could walk along the sky? why there was no dust along his road? why he did not fall backwards? But at last they greeted him like the poet of our own time:—

"Hail, orient Conqueror of gloomy night!"

and the human eye felt that it could not bear the brilliant majesty of Him whom they call "the Life, the Breath, the brilliant Lord and Father."

'Thus sunrise was the revelation of Nature, awakening in the human mind that feeling of dependency, of helplessness, of hope, of joy, and faith

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in higher powers, which is the source of all wisdom, the spring of all religion. But if sunrise inspired the first prayers, called forth the first sacrificial flame, sunset was the other time when again the heart of man would tremble, and his mind be filled with awful thought. The shadows of night approach, the irresistible power of sleep grasps man in the midst of his pleasures, his friends depart, and in his loneliness his thoughts turn again to higher powers. When the day departs, the poet bewails the untimely death of his bright friend, nay, he sees in his short career the likeness of his own life. Perhaps when he has fallen asleep his sun may never rise again, and thus the place to which the setting sun withdraws in the far west rises before his mind as the abode where he himself would go after death, where "his fathers went before him," and where all the wise and pious rejoice in "a new life with Yama and Varuna." Or he may look upon the sun, not as a short-lived hero, but as young and unchanging, and always the same, while generations after generations of mortal men were passing away. And hence, by the mere force of contrast, the first intimation of beings which do not wither and decay—of immortals of immortality! Then the poet would implore the immortal sun to come again, to vouchsafe to the sleeper a new morning. The god of day would become the god of time, of life and death. Again, the evening twilight, the sister of the dawn, repeating, though with a more sombre light, the wonders of the morning, how many feelings must it have roused in the musing poet—how many poems must it have elicited in the living language of ancient times! Was it the dawn that came again to give a last embrace to him who had parted from her in the morning? Was she the immortal, the always-returning goddess, and he the mortal, the daily-dying sun? Or was she the mortal, bidding a last farewell to her immortal lover, burnt, as it were, on the same pile which would consume her, while he would rise to the seat of the gods?' *

The views from all parts of the St. Théodule glacier are strikingly grand, and the near peaks, viewed over a vast expanse of snow, present totally different aspects from their appearance in the valley from which the traveller has just ascended. There being no objects near, by which to measure height and distance, the Matterhorn, Breithorn, and other summits, appear close at hand, while the sky overhead, in contrast with the snow all round, appears of the deepest blue. The summit of the pass is 11,180 feet above the sea, and from this point a superb panorama unfolds itself, stretching over the mountains of Piedmont. A small hut, originally built for smuggling purposes, stands close by under the shelter of a few rocks and here the tourist will gladly rest awhile, before making the descent to the Val Tournanche.

* Max Müller, 'Chips from a German Workshop,' ii. 94–8.

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TOUR OF MONTE ROSA.

Having crossed the main chain of the Pennine Alps by this pass, the question arises, in which direction is the journey to be pursued? There are two principal routes from this point, one leading westward towards Mont Blanc, the other eastward, curving round Monte Rosa. If the first route be chosen, the Val Tournanche must first be descended as far as Chatillon. This must be performed on foot, unless mules have been brought over the St. Théodule. It is a pleasant walk of about five hours, the latter portion of it leading through cool, shady woods. At Chatillon the great lateral valley of the Dora Baltea is entered, and between this town and the old Roman outpost, *Aosta*, a diligence plies several times in the day. A great deal of the scenery here is most striking, and the lower slopes of the mountains are clothed with luxuriant foliage. At Aosta there is a choice of two routes—one across the *Great St. Bernard* to Martigny, the other through *Courmayeur*, the *Allée Blanche*, and over the *Col de la Seigne*, and the *Col de Bonhomme* to *Chamouni*. For the details of these journeys a guide-book must be consulted.

If time can be spared, the tourist is most strongly recommended to take the eastern of the two alternative routes above indicated, and make the *tour of Monte Rosa* from the Val Tournanche, leaving the *tour of Mont Blanc* for a subsequent journey. This will lead through the *German valleys* of Monte Rosa; for it is a curious fact that though the upper valleys which surround this mountain have from time immemorial formed a part of Piedmont, the inhabitants are of Teutonic origin, and speak the German language. They live very much to themselves, have but little communication with their Italian neighbours in the lower parts of the valleys, and preserve unaltered many peculiar customs and family traditions. Practically, too, they govern themselves, the chief magistrate of each village, or 'commune,' being voluntarily intrusted with considerable power, so that by his intervention all disputes are settled, without reference to the central Italian authorities.

The principal village of these interesting communities is *Gressoney St. Jean*, and in making the tour of Monte Rosa from *Breuil*, at the foot of the St. Théodule, this must be the first point aimed at.

Gressoney may be reached by two routes, the first passes down the Val Tournanche to Chatillon, and then turns eastward and proceeds over the *Col de Jon* and the *Col de Ranzola*. This is a beautiful journey, but does not afford such striking mountain views as the alternative route over the *Col des Cîmes Blanches* and the *Furca di Betta*. This takes the tourist in an almost direct line south-east from Breuil to Gressoney. The peaks known as the

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Cimes Blanches are the northern summits of a spur which runs from the Pennine Alps due southward from near the Little Mont Cervin, separating the *Val Tournanche* from the *Challant* or *Ayas Thal*. The *Col* (9625 feet) lies to the north-east of these peaks, and from it a grand view of the main Alpine chain is seen. The valley of the Ayas must then be descended to *Resel*, or *Resy*, and the ridge which separates the *Challant Thal* from the *Lys Thal*, crossed by the *Furca di Betta*, a pass (8126 feet) lying between the *Bettliner Horn* and the *Belt Horn*. The above route will take two days, but it may be somewhat shortened by the tourist turning off to the south-east, across the Val Tournanche glacier, and so reaching

On the Tête Noire

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the *Col des Cîmes Blanches* directly, instead of descending the Val Tournanche to Breuil.

The next day's journey will be from Gressoney to *Alagna* in the Val Sesia over the *Col di Val Dobbia* (7844 feet). From the summit a fine view is gained of a large portion of the Pennine chain. Here the traveller will find ample accommodation in a *hospice* erected some years ago by the commune of *Riva*, and an inhabitant of Gressoney.

On the third day the resting-place for the night should be either *Borca* or *Macugnaga* in the Val Anzasca. This will be reached by ascending the Val Sesia for some distance, and then again striking eastward over another of the many mountain spurs which run southward from Monte Rosa and its neighbourhood. The pass by which this ridge is crossed, the *Col del Turlo* (8526 feet) is somewhat uninteresting, and has a very steep ascent, but the scene from the top is grand, extending over the Lago Maggiore and a large portion of the plain of Lombardy.

Arrived at Macugnaga the traveller is on the high road for regaining the valley of the Rhone at Visp. But he would do well to make this his head-quarters for a few days in order to make some excursions into the huge mountain-mass close at hand, to which the general name of Monte Rosa is applied. Macugnaga is to this side of the mountain what Zermatt is to the opposite side. A good guide should be employed, and in the course of two or three days scenery unsurpassed in the Alps may be seen.

Macugnaga is really the name of a district in which six distinct villages are situated, that properly called *Zum Strich* usually monopolises the name of the whole region. The village is finely situated in a green valley, backed by the stern precipices of Monte Rosa itself. The valley of the Saaser Visp is reached by passing over the celebrated Monte Moro pass, which, unlike those spoken of immediately above, lies over the main chain of the Lepontine Alps.

It must have struck every one as strange that this name, the *Moor's Mountain*, should have been given to a pass in a remote part of Switzerland, so far, apparently, removed from all Saracen influences. But that a settlement of Moors was really formed in the ninth and tenth centuries in the Val Anzasca and adjacent valleys has been proved by recent researches, and more particularly by a careful examination of the local names in these districts. The following quotation referring to this subject, from an extremely interesting work,* will not be out of place here:—

'Though no direct historical evidence of the fact exists, it seems impossible not to believe that this pass of the Monte Moro must have been held by the

* 'Words and Places,' by the Rev. Isaac Taylor, p. 112, &c. *See* also Dean Stanley's 'Sinai and Palestine,' p. 15.

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Saracens or Moors. In the first place, we find that a strong position, which commands the passage up the Val Anzasca on the Italian side of the pass is called CALASCA—a name which is apparently derived from the Arabic *kal'ah*, a castle, which occurs in the Alcalas and Calatas of Spain and Sicily. The peak opposite Calasca is called PIZ DEL MORO. On the other side of the valley is the CIMA DEL MORO, beneath which lies the village of MORGHEN. Crossing the Moro pass, the first hamlet we arrive at is placed on a mountain spur or terrace which commands the view both up and down the valley. This is called ALMAGEN, which, on the hypothesis of an Arab occupation, would be a most appropriate name, since *al mahal* denotes in Arabic "the station," or the "halting-place." A high grassy mound, probably the terminal moraine of an ancient glacier, is called the TELLIBODEN, the first syllable of which name seems to be the Arabic word, *tell*, a round hill. The neighbouring pasture goes by the name of the MATMARK, the ancient form of which was Matmar, or the "Moor's Meadow." Close by is another pasture called the EYEN—a name which is pronounced in exactly the same way as the Arabic *aïn*, a fountain, a source of waters—a very apposite description, as will be admitted by all the Alpine tourists who, before the recent construction of a road, have splashed across it ankle-deep for some hundred yards.

'Passing the DISTEL Alp—a doubtful Arabic name—we find the valley completely barred by an enormous glacier; this is called the ALALEIN glacier, and the Arabic interpretation of the name, *Alâ 'l aïn*, or "over the source," gives a most graphic picture of the precipitous wall of ice, with the torrent of the Visp rushing from the vast cavern in its side.

'Opposite Almagre, and a little to the north of the Alalein glacier, are three peaks known as the MISCHABEL HÖRNER, the midmost of which is the Dom. The latter part of the name Mi-schabel is pronounced almost exactly in the same way as the Arabic *gebel*, a mountain. The genius of the Arabic language would, however, require *gebel* to be a prefix rather than an affix, but it is quite possible that Mischabel may be a hybrid formation akin to Mongebello* in Sicily. Or we may derive the name from the Arabic word *migbâl*, which means, according to Freytag, 'crassus, ut mons.' The conquerors of the East, we may well believe, brought with them the word "dome," which Jerome tells us was, in Palestine and Egypt, the universal designation of a house-roof.

'The northern outlier of the Mischabel range is called the BALFRAIN, a name whose Arabic interpretation, "the peak with two river sources," describes the twin glaciers which hang from the flanks of the mountain, and send their tributary streams to join the Visp.

* The name which the Sicilian peasants give to Mount Etna, and which is also used by Dante, 'Inferno,' xiv. 56. 'In Mongibello alla fucina negra.'

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'It is probable that the etymologies assigned to some of these names may be fallacious, but the cases are too numerous, and the accordances with the physical features of the spot too precise to allow us to explain them away altogether by any hypothesis of accidental coincidence of sound; and therefore, though one may not be able to find any historical evidence whatever that the Moro was one of those passes which were occupied by Count Hugo's Moors, yet it seems impossible not to believe, on the evidence of the names alone, that the present inhabitants of the Saas valley are descended from the marauders from the Maurienne.'

As might be supposed, a splendid view is seen from the summit of the Monte Moro Pass, which well repays the somewhat laborious ascent. The descent towards Saas is easy, but the valley is a scene of utter desolation, contrasting forcibly with the brightness of the Val Anzasca, through which the ascent has been made. In about an hour and a half the chalets of the Distel Alp are reached, and immediately below there the path skirts the shore of the *Mattmark See*, a dreary lake formed by the melting of the neighbouring glaciers. Its waters have that peculiar turbid appearance always seen in streams and lakes produced from the melting of glacier-ice. Leaving this lake the traveller proceeds under the towering masses of the magnificent *Allalein* Glacier, in which the torrent of the Visp has its rise, through several hamlets standing in green meadows, until at length, after about nine hours walking from the summit of the Monte Moro, he reaches the quaint little village of *Saas*, properly *Saas im Grund*. Three hours lower down stands Stalden, the point of junction of the two valleys of the Visp. From this village the road to Visp is the same as that ascended on the journey to Zermatt.

An experienced ice-walker, instead of traversing the valley downwards from the *Mattmark* Inn, may strike across the high chain which separates the valley of Saas from that of Zermatt, and reach the latter village in about eleven or twelve hours. A thoroughly trustworthy guide is absolutely necessary; and no one should undertake this route unless he has a perfectly steady head in addition to considerable powers of endurance. The path leads across the *Adler Pass* (11,076 feet), which lies between the *Strahlhorn* and the *Rympfischhorn*, summits which reach nearly 13,000 feet in elevation. An unsurpassed view of mountains and glaciers is seen from the crest of the pass. In the descent the great *Findelen* Glacier is crossed, and here great caution is required.

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On the Tête Noire

FROM VISP TO CHAMOUNI.

The traveller is now supposed to have regained the Valley of the Rhone at Visp, and to be making his way down towards Martigny. The general scenery in this district is very uninteresting. On reaching *Susten*, the route northward may be taken through *Leuk* to *Leukerbad*, in order that the bathing establishment at the latter place may be visited, and the path leading over the *Gemmi* ascended for at least a portion of the way.

Leukerbad (Fr. *Loëche-les-Bains*) is a small village situated at the head of a short but beautiful valley on the southern slope of the Bernese Alps, watered by the Dala. It owes its celebrity to the hot springs in the neighbourhood. There are said to be no less than twenty-two of these, differing considerably in their temperature and mineral constituents. The waters are collected into large tanks, in which the bathers, clothed in long flannel gowns,

Mont Blanc from Chamouni.

are immersed up to the neck for several hours together. Before each bather

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floats a small table, on which are placed whatever he may require to relieve the tedium of the day—books, newspapers, dominoes, coffee, &c. Though the bathing is thus, as it were, in public, the utmost order and decorum prevail. Visitors are admitted to see the patients, by means of paths carried round and across the baths. On entering, a clamour of voices speaking different languages assails the ear, and the eye is amused by seeing dozens of persons of both sexes, stewing in the uninviting liquid, and killing time by various kinds of expedients. The visitor must be careful to conduct himself with extreme propriety, and, if a gentleman, not forget to remove his hat the moment he enters the bath, otherwise he is assailed by vituperations in all tongues, and is speedily drenched with the dirty-looking bath-water, which the bathers squirt by a peculiar motion of the hands to a great distance, and with uncomfortable accuracy of aim.

The Gemmi is the name given to one of the chief passes over the Bernese Alps. Its distinguishing feature is in its descent towards the valley of the Rhone. The path is here cut in zig-zags down the face of the almost perpendicular cliff; so that in looking upwards from Leukerbad the observer can with difficulty believe that a passage is possible over such a wall of rock as he sees before him. There is no real danger either in the ascent or descent if the traveller will trust to his own legs, and not approach too near the edge of the path. We are frequently told in exaggerated descriptions of this and similar passages in the Alps, that one false step on the part of the traveller would be certain destruction. This is perfectly true, but there is no reason in the world why the false step *should* be taken; and this remark will apply to nine-tenths of the so-called dangerous places in the Alps. In all the usual tourist paths, accidents are almost universally the result of culpable carelessness, or reckless foolhardiness.

In descending the valley again towards Leuk, a short excursion should be made on the left bank of the Dala to what are called the *Ladders* (*Leiter*). The river valley is here bounded by steep cliffs, on the top of which is situated the small village of *Albinen* (or *Arbignon*). To form a communication between this place and Leukerbad, eight large rude wooden ladders fixed to the perpendicular face of the rock have been constructed. The peasants trip up and down this seemingly dangerous path with the greatest ease; and the visitor, if he has a steady head, may readily ascend at least for some distance. It should be remembered, however, that as with all ladders, the ascent is much easier than the descent. Should the visitor be sufficiently courageous to climb to the top of the cliff, he may regain the road between Leukerbad and Leuk, at the village of *Inden*, and may save the journey to Susten, by turning to the right at this point, and crossing the shoulder of the mountain to Sierre.

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The next place of importance reached is *Sion* (Ger. *Sitten*), a most picturesque town when seen at a distance. Its three castles, situated on isolated eminences, give an old-world character to the place, and will remind the traveller somewhat of Bellinzona. Sion is the capital of the Valais, the upper valley of the Rhone. This district, like most of those now forming Swiss cantons, has had a chequered and turbulent history. In Roman times it was inhabited by various Celtic tribes, from one of which—the *Seduni*—Sion derives its name (*Sedunum*). On the breaking up of the Empire it was overrun by the Burgundians and Franks, and in the middle ages was the scene of numberless intestine wars. In the great struggle which the Swiss cantons carried on so successfully against Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, the Valais, as an independent ally of the Swiss, not only helped to repulse the invader, but profited by the occasion to seize upon the Lower Valais, then subject to the Duke of Savoy, an ally of Charles. This happened in 1475, and the conquered country was retained as a subject state until the French invasion in 1798. The whole Valais was then forced to become a member of the newly-constituted Helvetic republic, and five years later was formed by Buonaparte into a separate and independent republic. In 1810 another political change was forced upon the Valais, and it was joined to the French empire as the department 'Simplon.' The last great change came at the Congress of Vienna, when the country was restored once more to independence, and made a canton of the re-constructed Swiss confederation. The constitution was re-modelled on a more democratic basis in 1830. It will thus be seen that the Valais, at least the upper portion of it, has enjoyed an independent status, with few interruptions, for centuries. The present canton is divided into no less than thirteen smaller republics, called 'dixains.' Each 'dixain' has its council, which regulates local affairs, and sends representatives to the Cantonal Diet, which meets yearly at Sion. This Diet again chooses members to represent the entire canton in the upper chamber of the Federal Diet.

The language of the Upper Valais is German; in the Lower Valais a corrupt dialect of French; in the border dixains of Sion and Sierre the two are strangely mixed.

The Bishop of Sion, who is *ex-officio* president of the Valaisan Diet, is the representative of a long line of prelates established at Sion from the fourth century, if not earlier. In the Middle Ages, like the Bishop of Basle and the Abbot of St. Gall, he was a powerful prince, who could substantially assist his allies with large bodies of Swiss mercenary troops. The ruins of the episcopal castle of *Tourbillon* crown the isolated hill in the northern part of the town. They may be easily reached in half-an-hour, and command an extensive view. Closer to the town is a second castle, *Majoria*, so called from the *majors* or governors of the Valais, who formerly resided here. Both

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were destroyed by fire in the troubles of 1788. A third castle, *Valeria*, stands on a height opposite Tourbillon, and is now used as a seminary for priests; near it is the church of St. Catharine, founded in the ninth century, a monument of considerable architectural interest.

There is nothing of particular interest to detain the traveller between Sion and Martigny, and the journey may be conveniently made by railway. At Martigny the Rhone makes a sudden bend through a right angle to the north-west, and receives the torrent of the Dranse, by the overflowings of which the town has frequently been threatened with destruction. Martigny does not possess any noteworthy features, and the swamps which the Rhone forms in the neighbourhood make it an unhealthy place to stay in for any lengthened period. It derives its importance from its situation at the junction of the paths from Chamouni and the Great St. Bernard with the Simplon road.

Martigny is a convenient starting-point for making the tour of Mont Blanc. Two routes are open for reaching *Chamouni*—that by the *Col de Balme*, or that by the *Tête Noire;* the latter is to be preferred as affording the grandest scenery, but from the summit of the former splendid views of Mont Blanc and the surrounding peaks may be seen if the weather is very clear. If the whole tour of Mont Blanc cannot be undertaken, it would be best to go from Martigny to Chamouni by the Col de Balme, and return by the Tête Noire. The path over the Tête Noire ascends the valley of the Dranse for about three or four hours to the *Col de la Forclaz*. Before gaining the summit grand views of the lower valley of the Rhone are disclosed on looking back. In a few minutes more *Trient* is reached, near which the route over the Col de Balme diverges to the left. A deep and beautiful pine-forest is now entered, and the valley gradually becomes more and more contracted. Before reaching the summit of the pass a good inn will be found—a convenient resting-place for half-an-hour. A little further on the path has been carried completely through the rocks (*La Roche Percée*), close to the summit of the pass.*

The scenery here is of the grandest description, and nothing can exceed the beauty of the deep gorge, clothed on both sides with thick pine-woods. Soon after going through the Roche Percée the frontier of the Valais—marked by a bridge over the Eau Noire, and an old dismantled gateway—is passed, and the traveller finds himself under the protection of France. Near this place the small inn (the *Hôtel de la Cascade*) points to a beautiful waterfall close at hand, made by the mountain torrent, the Barberine. The scenery now becomes much more desolate and savage in character until the village of *Vallorcine* is reached, from which point to the neighbourhood of *Argentière*, in the valley of Chamouni, there is nothing which calls for special notice.

* The *Summit*, called the Tête Noire, lies to the south of the *Pass*. It has an elevation of a little more than 6000 feet.

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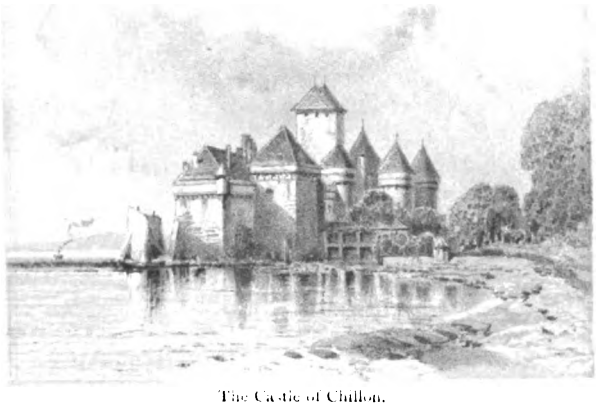
Near this latter village the stupendous glacier, to which it gives its name, descends like a huge frozen waterfall. At *Bois*, lower down the valley, another large glacier, that of *Bois* — the lower portion of the celebrated *Mer de Glace*— pours into the valley. Here the traveller should turn aside for a few minutes to see the source of the *Arveiron*, a tributary of the Arve, which issues from the glacier through a lofty arch of ice. After regaining the main road a short walk will lead into the village of *Chamouni*.



The Castle of Chillon.

Arrived at Chamouni, the visitor will have ample work before him for several days in exploring the neighbourhood. For the details of these excursions a trustworthy guide-book must be consulted. He will do well, after having carefully studied a good map of the district, to ascend first of all the ridge of mountain which lies on the right bank of the Arve, parallel to the stupendous range of which Mont Blanc forms the culminating point.

Lausanne.

This first excursion may be taken either to the *Flegère* or the *Brevon*. The

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Flegère is a spur of the mountains lying to the north of Chamouni, and its summit is nearly 6000 feet above the sea. From it a splendid view is gained of the whole of the Mont Blanc chain, and the sight penetrates into the numerous ice-fields which surround the base of the giant mountain itself.

The ascent of the Breven will take longer than the previous excursion, but as this mountain is nearly 2000 feet higher than the Flegère, the view, though somewhat similar to that seen from the latter summit, is grander. During the summer season the ascent of Mont Blanc is frequently made; a day should be chosen for ascending the Breven when a party is making the descent of the opposite mountain, as with a good glass their movements can be distinctly traced.

On the left bank of the Arve, almost immediately opposite the Flegère, rises a corresponding eminence, the *Montanvert*, from which a grand view is obtained up the *Mer de Glace*. This vast sea of ice fills the upper gorges of Mont Blanc. It is formed by the union of three great glaciers, the *Glacier du Tacul* (or *du Géant*), the *Glacier de Lechaud*, and the *Glacier du Talèfre*. On uniting, these three form a stupendous ice-stream, twelve miles long, and from four and a half to one and a half broad, which pours into the Valley of Chamouni. The lower portion of the Mer de Glace is known as the *Glacier des Bois*. It is usual to cross this ice-sea from the Montanvert to a precipice on the opposite side, known as the *Chapeau*. This route has now become so much frequented that both difficulty and danger in traversing it have been reduced to a minimum. Those who suffer from dizziness would do well to content themselves with the view from the Montanvert.

Persons with strong nerves and some little power of endurance should by all means pass up the Mer de Glace as far as the *Jardin*, a triangular piece of rock which rises out of the midst of the *Glacier du Talèfre*. In the summer this is covered with a coarse grass, among which many species of wild flowers grow, and from this circumstance the place receives its name. The contrast between this life and the dead silence and whiteness of all around is very striking. In passing to the Jardin the traveller penetrates into the very heart of the desolate region which surrounds Mont Blanc, and the view of the surrounding peaks and *aiguilles* is grand in the extreme. If the ascent of the Montanvert and the expedition to the Jardin be made in one day, the traveller should leave Chamouni before the sun is up. He will thus not only gain the advantage of reaching the ice before the sun has exercised much power upon it, but will also see Mont Blanc before sunrise, and thus gain a totally new idea of its surpassing grandeur. Coleridge's sublime 'Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni,' may here appropriately be quoted:—

> 'Hast thou a charm to stay the morning star
> In his steep course? So long he seems to pause

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On thy bald, awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there
As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my Heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the Vale!
O struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky, or when they sink:
Companion of the morning star at dawn,
Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged Rocks,
For ever shattered, and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?

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And who commanded (and the silence came,)
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven,
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, playmates of the mountain-storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
Ye signs and wonders of the element!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
Into the depth of clouds that veil thy breast—
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain! thou
That, as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth!
Thou kingly Spirit, throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.' *

* *See* 'Poems,' by S. T. Coleridge, edited by Derwent and Sara Coleridge. London, Moxon, 1863.

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Geneva.

CHAMOUNI TO GENEVA.

From Chamouni there is a choice of three routes for the tourist on his homeward journey. He may proceed by carriage direct to Geneva; or may

On the Lake of Geneva.

make the tour of Mont Blanc, passing over the Great St. Bernard, to Martigny; or may retrace his steps over the Tête Noire or Col de Balme to the same town. The second of these routes is, of course, by far the longer, but at the same time the more satisfactory, as it leads through some very fine scenery, and gives an opportunity for staying a night at the Hospice of

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the Great St. Bernard, so as to enjoy and appreciate the kindliness and hospitality of the monks of that far-famed community.

The journey from Martigny to the Lake of Geneva may be performed by rail, and a steamboat will be found waiting at Villeneuve, which, in the course of a few hours, traverses the whole length of the Lake, coasting along its northern shore, and stopping at almost every town and village situated upon it. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the beauties of this majestic lake, the praises of which have been sung by all the distinguished writers who have dwelt upon its banks: Voltaire, Rousseau, Madame de Staël, Gibbon, Byron. Many see in it an union of the stern features of the Lake of Lucerne and the more luxuriant beauties of the North Italian lakes. In matters such as this so much depends upon individual taste and temperament that it would seem to be rash and presumptuous to endeavour to construct an absolute scale of beauty. Almost every natural object may be said to have a beauty of its own—to have in it a certain individuality which makes it perfectly enjoyable. Would that the contented tourist could for ever be relieved from more tiresome travellers, who are for ever disparaging the present sight by comparison with something which *they* have seen but *you* have not.

Soon after leaving Villeneuve the quaint and picturesque *Castle of Chillon* is passed. This famous dungeon stands on an isolated rock which rises from the waters of this lake at a distance of about sixty feet from the shore, with which it is connected by a wooden bridge. Byron's pleasing poem 'The Prisoner of Chillon' is too well known to require more than a passing notice here.

In succession are passed *Montreux*, a famous sojourn for invalids; *Clarens*, made memorable by Rousseau and Byron; and *Vevay*, an important town, with a lovely climate and charming views. A stop should be made at *Ouchy*, in order to visit *Lausanne*, distant two miles from the lake, of which it commands delightful views.

Lausanne stands on the slopes of Mont Jorat. It is divided into two distinct portions by a deep ravine, now spanned by a magnificent bridge. The older portion of the town lying to the east of this ravine is intersected by many gullies, from which cause many of the streets are very steep, and this, coupled with the fact that they rarely run in straight lines, are generally narrow, and bordered on both sides with old houses, gives a singularly picturesque appearance to the place.

The cathedral is a fine building of good pointed architecture. It was consecrated in 1275, and by far the greater part of the existing structure dates from the forty years preceding that date. There are, however, still remaining some traces of a much older building. The church has been well

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restored, so far as the walls and monuments are concerned; but most of the ancient ecclesiastical arrangements have been obliterated.

The Canton Vaud, of which Lausanne is the capital, became a member of the Swiss Confederation in 1803, by Buonaparte's 'Act of Mediation;' and this Act was subsequently recognised by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. In the Middle Ages, the 'Pays de Vaud'—the usual designation of the present Canton previously to the political changes at the beginning of the present century—appertained to the Dukes of Savoy, under whom it was held by a considerable number of feudal lords. After the defeat of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, at Granson and Morat, the Bernese and their confederates overran the Pays de Vaud as a portion of the territory of Charles' ally, the Duke of Savoy. The district was then governed as a subject State, first by the Bernese and Freiburgers jointly, and then after 1536, by the Bernese alone, who ruled it by *Landvögte*, or Bailiffs of their own appointment. This state of things was put an end to by the French invasion in 1798.

The people of Vaud speak a dialect of French, and are almost entirely attached to the Helvetic Confession of Faith.

After passing *Rolle*, *Nyon*, *Coppet*, *Versoix*, and several other villages, the great city of *Geneva* is reached.

Geneva (Fr. *Genève*. Germ. *Genf*. Ital. *Ginevra*) is delightfully situated at the western extremity of the lake, where the 'blue waters of the arrowy Rhone' issue from it. It is a wealthy city, capital of the Canton of the same name, and when seen from the lake has an imposing appearance as the more modern portion is built near the water's edge. In the interior the streets are narrow and winding, but not particularly picturesque.

The cathedral almost rivals that of Lausanne. It is, however, of a much earlier date, and, like it, has been at once restored and disfigured.

Geneva has played an important part in European history from a very early period. Originally a Celtic settlement, it fell under Roman rule on the conquest of the neighbouring district. Subsequently it became subject first to the Burgundians, then to the Franks. Later, as a part of the empire, it was the scene of many struggles between its bishops—who aimed at temporal power, in which they were supported by the neighbouring Dukes of Savoy—and its Counts, who held their territory as a fief under the Emperor. The line of the Counts of Geneva becoming extinct, their fief reverted to the house of Savoy, which had previously succeeded in making the bishoprick of Geneva hereditary in its own line. The citizens of Geneva readily embraced the doctrines of the Reformation which were preached in their city by the French reformer Calvin, and the bishop was forced to retire to Annécy. The town then governed itself as an independent municipality,

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though the Dukes of Savoy still claimed jurisdiction over it, and formed alliances with the neighbouring Swiss cantons. The Dukes of Savoy in vain endeavoured to regain their supremacy over Geneva, and at length, in 1603, were obliged to acknowledge its independence by the treaty of S. Julien. During the eighteenth century many intestine feuds between the aristocratic and democratic parties in the State distracted the town, and this afforded a pretext for the French to seize upon the city and territory of Geneva in 1798, and to annex it to France as the department *du Léman*. The events of 1814 again restored it to independence, and united it to the Swiss Confederation as the twenty-second member of that Republic.

THE END.

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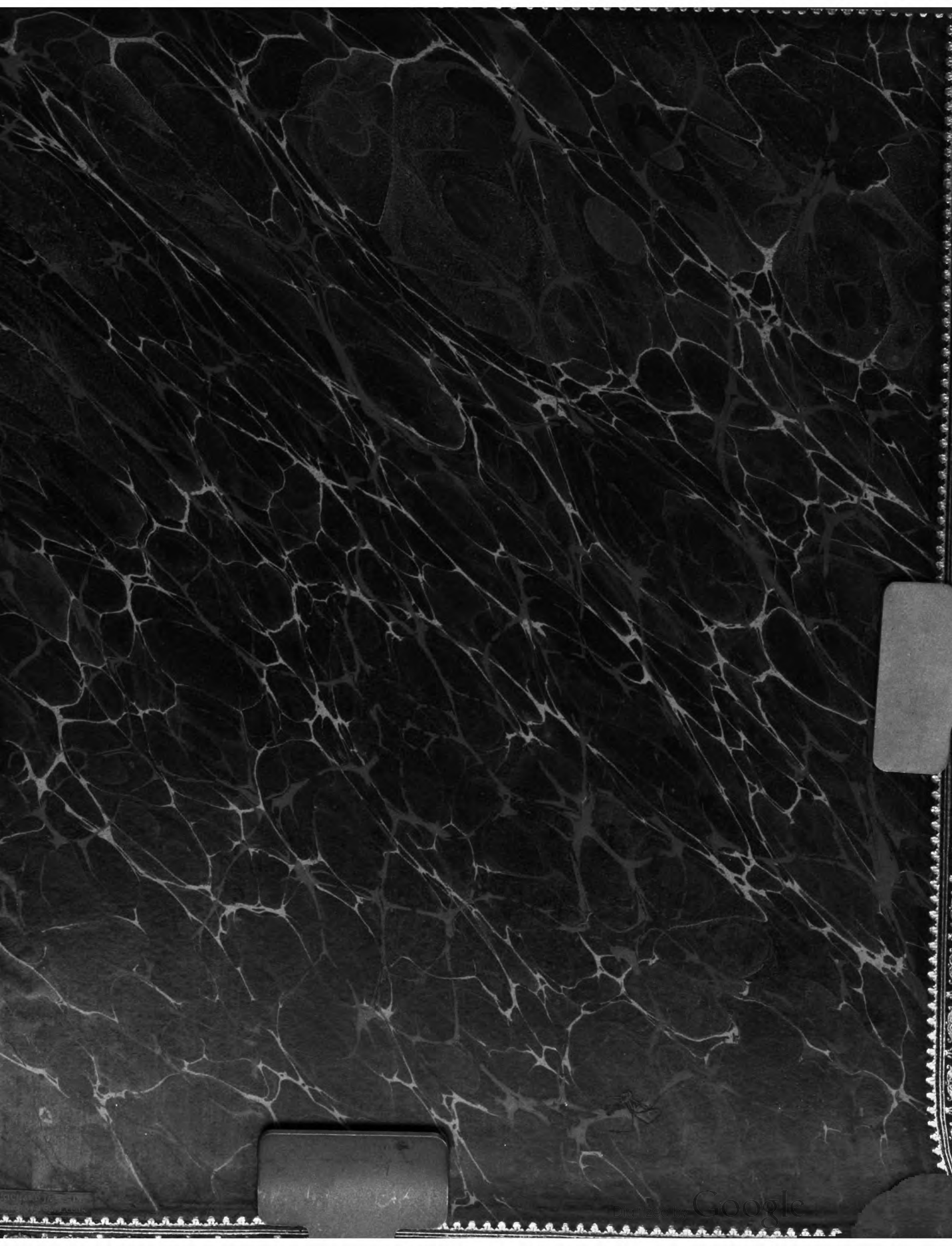
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